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Unexpected family ties

EXPRESS PHOTO COURTESY OF ROMANNA KLYMKIW
 Misha Kostiv (left), Romanna Klymkiw (centre) and Vova Kostiv (right) are pictured in Gimli. What began as a friendship while helping Ukrainian newcomers settle in the community turned into a family connection after the Klymkiw and Kostiv families discovered they are distant relatives.

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Good Times FINANCING



Something really special: Gimli woman and Ukrainian newcomers find out they're related

By Patricia Barrett

A chance friendship that developed between a Gimli resident and Ukrainian newcomers turned out to be a family affair after they discovered they were related.

Romanna Klymkiw, who lives in Gimli and has grandparents who emigrated from Ukraine, said she was surprised to find out that some of the Ukrainians she became good friends with over the two or so years since their arrival in town are actually distant cousins.

"We all think it's pretty amazing. They are some of my favourite people and my closest friends. I am a person who believes in chosen families, but I think finding out that there was a genetic connection between us is something really special," said Klymkiw. "I think the chances of becoming such close friends with people you met from across the world and then finding out you have a DNA connection is bizarre. But it shows us how small the world really is."

After Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, Klymkiw began overseeing the resettlement of Ukrainians who chose to come to Gimli. That included organizing a collection depot for donated clothing



From left: Misha Kostiv, Romanna Klymkiw and Vova Kostiv. The Klymkiw and Kostiv families became good friends in Gimli and then discovered a few years later they are related.

and household items.

Sisters-in-law Kristina and Yuliia Kostiv and Yuliia's son, Kostiantyn, were among the first in a small group of about 12 Ukrainian newcomers to arrive in Gimli that year after the Canadian government authorized emergency entry for Ukrainians. They and Klymkiw became friends. Their husbands, who arrived in Gimli later, turned out to be Klymkiw's distant cousins.

"I wanted to help resettle the new-



EXPRESS PHOTOS COURTESY OF ROMANNA KLYMKIW

From left: Romanna Klymkiw and her husband Michael, Kristina and Misha Kostiv, and Vova and Yuliia Kostiv. After emigrating from Ukraine to Gimli, Misha and Vova discovered Romanna is their distant cousin..

comers. I grew up in Winnipeg and I know what it feels like to move to a small town without connections and how challenging it can be. So I made

Continued on page 3



Evergreen Staff Spotlight Celebrating the People Who Make Our Schools Work

Meet Della Magnusson, Literacy and Numeracy Consultant

Since joining Evergreen School Division in 2006, Della Magnusson has played a key role in supporting student learning across the division. As a Literacy and Numeracy Consultant, she works closely with teachers to strengthen instruction and help ensure all students have the skills they need to succeed.

Della's path into education was shaped by both admiration and personal experience. As a student, she looked up to her teachers and saw the joy and purpose in their work. At the same time, she understood that learning does not always come easily. "I had to work hard for every mark I earned," she shares. "That helped me understand how challenging school can be, and it made me want to support students who need encouragement and guidance."

A unique aspect of Della's role is the time she spends directly in classrooms. Rather than working primarily behind the scenes, she collaborates alongside teachers to support instruction in real time. "I believe this work should be collaborative and supportive," she explains. "The goal is to make teaching more manageable and effective while improving outcomes for students."

Over the years, Della has seen meaningful growth in literacy across the division. One moment that stands out came during a conversation with a Grade 1 student. After complimenting the student's reading, the child replied confidently, "Of course, I am in Grade 1, so I can read everything now." Della reflects on this moment as a powerful reminder of the impact of strong instruction and support. "The confidence behind those words was incredible," she says. "That is why this work matters."

For Della, Evergreen is more than a workplace. It is a true community. "We are the kind of division where people know and support one another," she says. "No matter which school I visit, I am always welcomed into classrooms and inspired by the dedication of our teachers."

She also believes it is important for the public to understand the full picture of public education. While challenges can sometimes draw attention, they do not reflect the everyday reality in schools. "On a daily basis, schools are safe, caring places where educators are working thoughtfully and intentionally to support students," Della explains. "There is a great deal of important work happening behind the scenes to help every child learn and grow."

Thank you, Della, for your leadership, your commitment to collaboration, and for helping build strong literacy and numeracy skills across Evergreen.

Interviewed by and photographed with trustee, Dianna Auer



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> COUSINS, FROM PG. 13

a big effort to help people build community and connections with one another," said Klymkiw. "Over time, me and Kristina became very close. Kristina's husband, Misha, arrived in Gimli at the end of 2022, and Yuliia's husband, Vova, arrived in 2023."

The three couples started spending a lot of time together over the next few years, including at Christmas and New Year's Eve and during the summer when they'd have barbecues on weekends. They even took holidays together.

Then in 2024, Klymkiw's mom made a Facebook post for Mother's Day, and shared some "neat family photos" that she had received from a cousin she had reconnected with.

"In one of the photos my mom posted is her great-great-grandmother, Helena Kostiv. I thought, 'Wow, that's the same last name as my friends Misha and Vova.' So I asked them what village in Ukraine their parents were from and it turned out to be the exact same village, Vilkhovets, as my mom's great-great-grandmother's," said Klymkiw. "We thought there must be a chance we're related."

In 2025 they decided to buy DNA tests. The results showed that "we do have matching DNA," said Klymkiw. They also had a Klymkiw family tree as another reference source. The name Kostiv (Ukrainian spelling) shows up in her family tree as Kostiw, the anglicized version.

"They've spent quite a bit of time with my parents, and my mom thinks this is so neat because it's her family connection," she said. "They've met my sister and a couple of our cousins — their cousins, too!"

They're hoping to meet Misha and Vova's parents in Ukraine when the war ends and it's safe to do so.

Misha Kostiv said it would be an understatement to say that he and his brother were surprised to find a distant relative so far from home.

"It was one of those moments where everything just stops for a second. Vilkhovets, a small village in the Ternopil region, is not a big place," said Kostiv. "So when we heard that we share not only the same last name but also the same hometown, it immediately made us wonder if there could be a deeper connection."

The more they thought about it, the more it seemed possible they "weren't just strangers meeting by chance but distant relatives whose paths somehow crossed again, thousands of kilometres away from home," he said.

He has always been curious about his family history, he said. Since he was a child, he would collect old family photographs and ask who the people were, where they lived and what their story was. At home in Ukraine, he had been thinking about doing a DNA test to discover more about his family history. The unexpected connection with Romanna's family was the final push.

"It felt like a rare opportunity to turn cu-

riosity into something real," said Kostiv. "I realized that if I didn't do the test now, I would always wonder."

They used MyHeritage for the DNA test. It didn't, however, show any direct connection between them, he said. Normally it would show matches up to about fourth or fifth cousins. So they uploaded their DNA to GEDmatch, which provides more in-depth analysis.

GEDmatch found a shared DNA segment of 7.4 centimorgans, pointing to a common ancestor about seven or eight generations earlier.

"On its own, that might seem like a distant connection. But when you combine that with the fact we share the same last name and come from the same small village, it becomes much more meaningful," said Kostiv. "At that point, it stopped feeling like a coincidence. It became clear that we are connected through a real shared ancestor, and that realization was honestly incredible."

The Kostivs had decided to move to Manitoba after the Russians invaded Ukraine because they knew of its strong Ukrainian community and that it has "deep respect" for Ukrainian culture and language.

"That's how we discovered Gimli, a beautiful lakeside town with a welcoming atmosphere and a strong Ukrainian presence," he said. "It felt like the right place, and it truly was. We met so many kind, genuine people here and volunteers who supported us in ways we will never forget. And among them was Romanna."

He said Romanna helped them with "everything," from finding accommodation to booking a doctor's appointment.

"To find a true friend across the ocean in a town we hadn't even heard of just a few years ago, and then discover we are actually family, turns this story into something truly extraordinary."

When they visited Romanna's parents, they called their parents. Romanna's mom, who speaks Ukrainian very well, had a conversation with them.

"It was such a special and emotional moment, seeing our families connect like that," said Kostiv. "I truly believe one day the war will end. When it does, I hope we'll be able to bring everyone together, whether in Ukraine or in Canada."

The DNA analysis also revealed that the Kostivs have relatives in Dauphin, and they were able to get in touch with them.

"It's an incredible feeling to come to a distant country, across the ocean, and discover that you're not as far from your roots as you thought," he said. "In a way, it makes the world feel much smaller and much more connected."



The village of Vilkhovets in western Ukraine.



A old family photo showing the Kostiv family in village of Vilkhovets in Ukraine.

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Gimli landmarks to light up for rare disease awareness

By Annaliese Meier

Three prominent landmarks in Gimli will be illuminated in red and blue next month to raise awareness about a rare and often underdiagnosed vascular disease.

On May 8, the community's Viking statue, T-33 jet and municipal office will be lit for the first time in support of Fibromuscular Dysplasia (FMD) Awareness Month.

The initiative is being led locally by Julie Vogelsang, a volunteer with the Fibromuscular Dysplasia Society of America, who says the display is both a public education effort and a deeply personal milestone.

"In April 2022, my life changed forever," Vogelsang said, recalling her diagnosis with a severe form of FMD affecting four arteries in her neck. "It's a rare, incurable cardiovascular disease that I'm still learning to navigate and face with courage."

Her diagnosis came unexpectedly during testing for another condition.

"In 2022, I was referred to the Peter Munk Cardiac Centre in Toronto for a separate medical issue, and it was

during an MRI that FMD was discovered," she said.

Since then, daily life has required careful adjustments.

"I have to constantly monitor my activities and risk factors — no straining, no extreme neck positions, no contact sports, and avoiding anything that could raise my blood pressure, like heavy lifting, caffeine, alcohol or extreme temperatures," she said.

FMD is a condition that causes abnormal cell growth in the walls of arteries, leading to narrowing, tearing or enlargement of the vessels. It most commonly affects women and can have serious consequences if left undiagnosed.

Health impacts linked to the disease can include arterial dissections, aneurysms, stroke or transient ischemic attacks (TIA), spontaneous coronary artery dissection (SCAD), high blood pressure and chronic headaches or migraines. Some patients also experience pulsatile tinnitus — a rhythmic sound often described as hearing one's heartbeat.

Despite its potential severity, aware-



EXPRESS PHOTO BY CATHY NAULT

Julie Vogelsang stands beside the T-33 Silver Star aircraft monument along First Avenue in Gimli, one of three landmarks that will be illuminated May 8 for Fibromuscular Dysplasia awareness. The jet, installed in 1971, will be lit in red as part of the community-wide display.

ness of FMD remains limited.

Researchers believe many cases go undiagnosed due to a lack of public and clinical familiarity with the condition, which can delay diagnosis and treatment.

Vogelsang said increasing awareness is critical to improving outcomes.

"Awareness and early diagnosis can help reduce the risks of stroke or artery dissection," she said. "It can take years for someone to receive a diagnosis after their first symptoms, so education — especially among health-care providers — is key to improving care and quality of life."

She added that symptoms can vary but often include high blood pres-

sure, migraines, dizziness, neck pain and pulsatile tinnitus.

FMD is also frequently misdiagnosed.

"It's often mistaken for vertigo, anxiety or hypertension," Vogelsang said. "That's why it's so important for people to advocate for themselves and seek out specialists familiar with vascular diseases."

For those experiencing symptoms, she encourages early action and education.

"Seek medical evaluation and learn the warning signs of stroke or artery dissection — things like sudden

Continued on page 5



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2026 Census to shape decisions across Canadian communities

By Dennis Young

Every five years, Canadians take part in the census. The upcoming 2026 Census will be Canada's 24th national count, gathering valuable information to inform decisions across communities, provinces and territories, and the entire country.

This process builds a statistical snapshot of Canada's diverse population and the places we call home, capturing demographic, social, economic and agricultural data.

Below are several ways this information is used:

Federal: Population totals ensure fair representation in electoral districts. Household details guide programs such as Old Age Security and child benefits.

Provincial: Data highlights regions that may require new daycares, schools, retirement homes or health facilities. Traffic patterns help plan upgrades for roads and networks.

Municipal: Local councils rely on census figures to determine service needs such as schools, policing, fire protection, senior housing and re-



PHOTO SUBMITTED

Canadians will begin receiving 2026 Census invitation letters in early May, marking the country's 24th national count and helping gather key data that informs decisions for communities, governments and businesses.

source allocation.

Agriculture: The census reveals farming trends and provides insights for marketing and production decisions.

Businesses: Companies use these numbers to select locations for new factories, stores or offices, and to evaluate customer potential in different areas.

Individuals: Families can review the data to ensure their neighbourhood meets their needs. Professionals may reference salary averages during

negotiations, while students use job-demand statistics to make informed career decisions.

Completing your census helps deliver high-quality information to support key decisions affecting Canadian families, neighbourhoods and businesses.

The official website for the 2026 Census of Population in Canada, including Manitoba, is census.gc.ca.

For the 2026 cycle, households across Manitoba will receive invitation letters starting in early May 2026

with instructions on how to complete the questionnaire.

Here are the Interlake's census records from Library and Archives Canada:

1901 — 1,439 / 1911 — 1,271 / 1921 — 1,591 / 1931 — 1,418 / 1936 — 1,450 / 1941 — 1,455 / 1946 — 1,550 / 1951 — 1,867 / 1961 — 1,930 / 1971 — 2,030 / 1976 — 2,272 / 1981 — 2,408 / 1986 — 2,500 / 1991 — 2,567 / 1996 — 2,704 / 2001 — 2,831 / 2006 — 2,880 / 2011 — 3,027 / 2016 — 3,164 / 2021 — 3,114.

> RARE DISEASE, FROM PG. 4

severe headaches, vision changes, weakness or trouble speaking," she said. "A head-to-pelvis CT scan is important because FMD can affect multiple arteries."

While the diagnosis can be overwhelming, Vogelsang said there is reason for hope.

"Most people with FMD learn to manage their symptoms and live a normal lifespan," she said. "It's highly manageable with medication, and the focus is on preventing complications and maintaining quality of life."

That sense of hope is reflected in the upcoming landmark illumination.

"Personally, the illumination of these Gimli landmarks gives me hope," she said. "It gives me hope that the private daily struggle of FMD becomes better known and leads to improved diagnosis and support."

She said the initiative also creates a sense of connection.

"I feel a little less alone seeing these landmarks lit up and knowing there are others out there navigating this disease," Vogelsang said. "Across the country, people are working to raise awareness, and that makes you feel part of something bigger."

Vogelsang said community support plays an important role in that effort.

"People can help by starting conversations, sharing stories and learning more about FMD," she said. "Education is key, especially since many

family doctors may not immediately recognize the condition."

The colour choices — blue and red — align with international awareness efforts tied to the Fibromuscular Dysplasia Society of America.

The RM of Gimli says supporting the initiative was a natural fit.

"The RM of Gimli was pleased to support this initiative in recognition that Fibromuscular Dysplasia is serious and that awareness plays a critical role in early diagnosis, treatment, and support," said Christine Payne, manager of community engagement. "Council recognized that illuminating our community landmarks is a meaningful way to stand with those affected by FMD and to help bring visibility to an important health issue that impacts individuals, families and communities everywhere."

Payne said municipalities have an important role to play in awareness efforts. "Participating in awareness campaigns is an important part of being a caring, inclusive and responsive community," she said. "By participating in initiatives like this, the RM of Gimli is demonstrating compassion, solidarity and a strong commitment to community well-being."

On May 8, the Viking statue will be illuminated in blue, the T-33 jet in red, and the municipal office in both colours, with RM staff coordinating the effort. "These well-known landmarks will

serve as visible symbols of support throughout the evening, helping to spark conversation and raise awareness within the community and beyond," Payne said.

She added the initiative carries added meaning given its local roots.

"Council was grateful for the advocacy and commitment shown by Julie Vogelsang and is proud to support residents who inspire awareness, understanding, and positive change," Payne said.

The municipality hopes the display leaves a lasting impression.

"We hope residents take away a message of awareness, understanding, and compassion," Payne said. "It also reflects Gimli's values as a community that shows up for one another."

Gimli's participation builds on a growing national movement. In recent years, landmarks across Canada — including the Winnipeg sign, Esplanade Riel, Toronto's CN Tower and BC Place in Vancouver — have

been illuminated for FMD awareness.

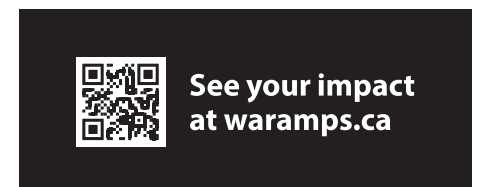
May is recognized internationally as Fibromuscular Dysplasia Awareness Month, with advocacy groups encouraging education, early detection and support for those living with the disease.

More information about FMD and support resources is available through the Fibromuscular Dysplasia Society of America or by contacting Vogelsang locally.



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letter to the editor

Letters to the Editor: news@expressweeklynews.ca

Aspen Park: A 54-year legacy left off the map

Recent reporting on the proposed Harbour Colony Poultry Project in the RM of Armstrong has brought to light a deeply concerning issue for the residents of Aspen Park. A review of the Technical Review Committee (TRC) reports and the proponent's engineering documents reveals what can only be described as a calculated erasure: the authors of these reports have effectively rendered the 350 residents of Aspen Park invisible.

What makes this particularly galling is that the proponent's own engineers clearly identified Aspen Park on their project maps in 2021. Yet, in subse-

quent reports used to justify the project, this established community was de-emphasized. Aspen Park is not a temporary settlement; it served as military housing for the Royal Canadian Air Force and has been a vibrant condominium community of families and seniors since the province transitioned the land to civilian use in 1972.

The cross-border implications of this project are staggering. While the RM of Armstrong stands to benefit from the tax revenue of this 140,000-bird operation, residents in the RM of Gimli are expected to bear the environmental and infrastructure costs. By omitting an established residential enclave of 350 people, these reports bypass the real human consequences of industrial odours and waste lagoons. Most critically, they ignore the catastrophic risk to a shared aquifer — the essential source for the Gimli

Airport Reservoir and the community's drinking water.

However, where the technical reports failed, provincial and local leadership has stepped up. There is sincere gratitude among residents for Minister Mike Moyes' responsiveness in calling for an independent hearing through the Clean Environment Commission. Furthermore, the steadfast support of Mayor Kevin Chudd and Gimli council has been vital in ensuring concerns are heard.

Aspen Park is not an empty field. It is a community of families and seniors who deserve to be seen. The province must ensure that this independent review fully accounts for the lives and livelihoods of those residing in Aspen Park.

- Sincerely,
Sheri Flores

Call for action to protect Lake Winnipeg before it's too late

I attended the above hearing, along with other members of Aspen Park, last Wednesday evening. I left with many doubts about how this project has progressed so far without meaningful public scrutiny.

What happened to protecting the lake? What we are seeing now feels like a fait accompli, with little com-

mon sense applied to how to remediate an almost finished project. Access to Lake Winnipeg via any waterway, in the event of an overflow from a holding pond, should not be an option.

I note that the engineering company representing the colony has rejected any consideration of a pipeline to the Gimli septic system. This raises further questions: how much extra capacity does Gimli currently have to handle additional load? If capacity is insufficient, upgrades should be completed before this massive undertaking is allowed to proceed any further.

The provincial government must step up and take a clear stand. Its rhetoric must be backed by action. Protect the lake before it is truly beyond salvation.

This colony is very large — well beyond the size typically recommended for such developments. Why is that? And will it become a permanent part of our landscape for the foreseeable future? The answer appears to be yes.

We must get this right the first time. We will not get a second chance.

- David Tustin
Aspen Park

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Hackers breach Canada Life, steal Canadians' personal data

By Patricia Barrett

Canadians have once again become the victims of cybercriminals after insurance company Canada Life had its IT system breached this month and customer data stolen.

Canada Life provided few details about the cybersecurity incident.

It said in an April 20 news release that the "unfortunate" event involved "unauthorized access to certain applications through an employee account" and that the company launched an immediate investigation.

"Our primary focus is the protection and care of our customers, advisors and employees," said the company. "While we are finalizing a thorough analysis to understand the exact nature and full scope of impact, we have begun communicating with our customers."

Individuals whose personal information was accessed will be contacted and offered credit-monitoring protection, it added.

Canada Life was founded in 1847 as the Canada Life Assurance Company. It provides personal health insurance for medical services such as physiotherapy and psychology, dental insurance, life insurance, retirement planning and insurance for businesses and their employees.

Other media reports said hackers known as ShinyHunters stole the data of about 70,000 Canadians from Canada Life.

Bill Buckels, a retired systems analyst, software engineer and wealth systems manager who lives in the Interlake, said the Canada Life cyber attack represents an ongoing failure of companies to protect clients' data.

"Well, of course, Canada Life was hacked," said Buckels. "This is another good case for not storing customer information where it can be accessed through the internet."

He said he's not surprised the company's IT system was breached as the ironclad security protocols he worked with back in his day are just not being implemented now because of convenience. That's why the news is full of stories about companies being hacked and client data stolen.

Strong protocols from 35 or 40 years ago still exist and can be built into today's IT systems, he said. Those security protocols include "data or information hiding" whereby individual clients are linked only to a "generic tag" such as a customer ID or a transaction number, with none of their personal data attached, as well as not allowing the transmission of sensitive data from a company's server over the internet.

"Canada Life should have had information hiding. In the 1980s and 1990s, this was a tenet of computer privacy, and we didn't have this hacking problem back then," said Buckels, who worked in the financial sector for companies such as RBC Dominion Securities and for stock exchanges and international banking systems. "If you're going to leave the door open, the criminals are going to come in and steal everything."

According to his research, Buckels said the stolen Canada Life data included names, contact details, and possibly financial and health insurance data.

Hackers accessed the system via a single employee's account. Buckels said it could have been a phishing email that the employee opened or the hackers could have obtained a previously hacked password that the employee was using for other applications, and the hackers tried it out and were able to access Canada Life client data stored on the Cloud. In this way, the hackers didn't have to "break in through a firewall; they just walked in the front door."

"If the employees have access to client information through the internet, then you as the company have compromised your own system, and you're to blame," said Buckels. "Under what circumstances does an employee need to have access to more than one customer at a time? If they choose to, Canada Life can have a 'closed' system for employees that won't compromise the data of thousands and thousands of clients."

Cybercriminals not only sell personal data on the dark web to other criminals, but they'll also sit on it for years. For example, if they can't read encrypted data they've stolen, Buckels said they'll store it for years until new technology is developed to "crack" older encryption standards.

"The Canada Life data is obviously going to be set aside and could be frozen until thawed in five years' time or more," he said.

"IF YOU'RE GOING TO LEAVE THE DOOR OPEN, THE CRIMINALS ARE GOING TO COME IN AND STEAL EVERYTHING."

That's why a hacked company saying there's "no evidence client data is being shared on the dark web" or offering its clients free time-limited credit-monitoring services is virtually meaningless. It does nothing to protect victims whose data was hacked.

"Canada Life is giving a credit check for a year or two as compensation to the victims. But it's clear that these are really stupid people when it comes to protecting data and they should be punished like criminals to teach them a lesson," said Buckels. "The company needs to pay when that data eventually gets used and the damage occurs, whether

that's tomorrow or a decade or more from now. Canada Life is effectively an accessory to this breach and it should be liable to the same penalties given to hackers — who may never be caught."

He underscored that fact that when IT systems are not exposed to the internet, data cannot be stolen. Thieves would have to physically steal a server containing data by dynamiting brick and mortar to get to it.

What Canada Life and other companies with weak IT protocols need to do now is "remove client data from the internet altogether," he said.

The Canadian Investment Regulatory Organization (CIRO) experienced a major cybersecurity breach in 2025 that affected about 750,000 Canadian investors, including those in the Interlake. Hackers stole personal and financial data (including birthdates, SIN, bank account numbers and eye colour) after they accessed CIRO's IT system. Interlakers just found out in March their data was stolen. A class-action lawsuit has been launched (see Feb. 5 online edition of the *Express Weekly News*).

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The formal application is available from your local Manitoba Transportation and Infrastructure office. The deadline for these applications will be **no later than May 22, 2026.**

For more information, please contact one of the following Transportation and Infrastructure offices:

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RM of Armstrong focuses on potential overland flooding concerns

By Jennifer McFee

The RM of Armstrong has begun addressing some overland flooding concerns and is working on mitigation practices.

"Some specific locations have been identified," said chief administrative officer Colleen Mayer. "We work on a process of saving lives and structures as far as prioritizing."

If any residents have concerns, Mayer suggests that they contact the RM office or their local councillor.

In other Armstrong news:

- The RM of Armstrong sold 30 parcels of vacant land in January to Buffalo Prairie Inc.

"These parcels, located in the northwest area of the municipality, were RM-owned vacant property," Mayer said. "Council passed a resolution on how to proceed with the land sales, and administration moved forward a per council's instruction."

The RM placed ads in the local papers and on its website to accept tenders. The tender closed on Jan. 7, and council held a special meeting to open the sealed envelopes on Jan. 13 to open the sealed envelopes. Buffalo Prairie Inc. was the successful bidder. The property has now been

transferred, and council decided to buy GICs with the proceeds. The RM bought \$2.4 million worth of GICs for 12-month terms as of April 1.

- Council approved a quote for \$8,900 from Loewen Drafting to create design drawings for the new Fraserwood firehall.

"We are in early stages of this and have just seen preliminary drawings. Once design in complete, we will work towards hiring a general contractor to oversee the project," Mayer said.

"It is council's hope to have this built in 2027. Some of the monies acquired through the sale of vacant RM land will be used to construct a new firehall. Council is also seeking a location for the new firehall to operate from, but it will be in Fraserwood. More information will be available as the project moves along."

- Council conditionally approved a request for CKT Contracting to operate an automotive and recreational vehicle repair shop from their location on Road 4W in Inwood. The conditional use request was to allow for the existing shop to conduct public vehicle repairs and government safeties.

- Council approved the payment of the 2026 levy amount of \$6,806.47 for the Interlake Veterinary Services District Board.

- Council agreed to purchase ads in the *Stonewall Teulon Tribune* and *Express Weekly News* for 2026 at a cost of \$1,626 plus tax. The ads will be for Mother's Day, Father's Day, Canada Day, grad congratulations, National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, Remembrance Day and a Christmas season message.

- The RM is transferring \$275,000 to reserve accounts with \$5,000 to the election reserve fund, \$50,000 to the snow removal fund, \$115,000 to the fire equipment reserve fund, \$20,000 to the public works reserve fund, \$50,000 to the flood mitigation/capital reserve fund, \$15,000 to the waste management reserve fund and \$20,000 for the general reserve fund. In addition, council approved a transfer of \$742,000 to the land sale reserve fund due to an unaudited surplus in 2025 due to land sales.

- Council approved the placement of a swing set at the Fraserwood Heritage Park.

- Council agreed to implement

changes at the Meleb Waste Disposal Site and the Inwood and Chatfield transfer stations based on recommendations by administration. In December 2025, council approved recommendations on a study completed by ECS Environmental Engineering. They'll begin working on those recommendations in the next month or two.

- The RM of Armstrong has two scholarships available to permanent residents of the community — one for university and one for post-secondary education. Council agreed to increase the amount to \$500 each from \$300 each for 2026 high school grad.

- The RM of Armstrong will upgrade its Windows Server 2016 licence to Windows Server 2022 at a cost \$1,796.06 plus tax.

- Council approved the selling of a property to the Chatfield Community Club for the price of \$1. The hall assumes all costs for legal and land transfer fees. The property is located between two Chatfield Community Centre parcels of land.

Community Support Service

AA Arborg
Thursdays - 7:30 pm
Arborg Support Centre
327 Main Street
Contact 204-376-5861

AA Eriksdale
Eriksdale United Church building
#7 Main Street, Eriksdale (side door)
Meetings are Mondays
at 6:30 p.m.

AA Winnipeg Beach
Lady of the Lake RC Church
Corner of Hwy. 9 and Lake Ave.,
Winnipeg Beach
Meetings are Saturdays
between 7 and 8 p.m.
Contact Ann J 204-389-3417

Gimli Group AA
Bldg 18 Municipal Rd
Industrial Park
Fri & Sun Mtgs at 7:30 pm

Al-Anon
Gimli and Winnipeg Beach
Join us at 17B Loni Beach Road, next to New Horizon building... Gimli at 7:00 pm Wednesday evenings for an hour of support, strength, guidance and Hope. Contact 204-389-4777.
All ages welcome.

AA Riverton Group
12 Main St. at the
Riverton Senior Centre
Mondays 7:30 p.m.

Walks unite communities in dementia support

By Haley Cvar

Communities across the province are preparing to step up in support of

families affected by dementia as the Alzheimer Society of Manitoba hosts its annual IG Wealth Management Walk for Alzheimer's throughout May and June.

The walk is the organization's largest annual fundraiser, bringing together participants of all ages to raise funds and awareness while supporting people living with dementia, as well as their families, friends and care partners.

"It's one of my favourite days because of the strong sense of community — you really feel like you're a part of something," said CEO Erin Crawford. "It's also just a lot of fun. There's music, activities for the kids and so much laughter and love. You'll leave feeling uplifted."

Walks are scheduled in several Manitoba communities, including Selkirk on June 4, Steinbach on June 7, Gimli on June 12, Altona on June 17, Portage la Prairie on June 18 and Darlingford on June 20. Brandon will host its walk earlier, on May 27.

Funds raised through the events help the Alzheimer Society continue

offering critical services, including one-on-one support, education sessions, support groups and dementia-friendly programming aimed at helping individuals and families live well

with the disease.

For participants like Gary Garbutt, the walk holds deep personal meaning. Garbutt, who walks with his team "Gary's Groupies," said the event has become one of the most important days of the year for him and his wife, Barb.

"It's inspiring," he said. "You see all those

people, and you think, 'Wow, there's a lot of support out there.'"

Organizers encourage participants to register as individuals or teams, begin fundraising and share their reasons for walking with their networks. The event also serves as an opportunity to connect with others who understand the challenges of dementia and to show support for those navigating the journey.

Visit alzheimer.mb.ca to learn more about the walk and to register.

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HUNTINGTON'S DISEASE
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30k MARATHON 7:30 am	1/2 MARATHON 7:30 am	10k RUN/WALK 8:00 am	5k RUN/WALK 8:00 am
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"YOU SEE ALL THOSE PEOPLE, AND YOU THINK, 'WOW, THERE'S A LOT OF SUPPORT OUT THERE.'"

Talks were 'stalled' on use of Gimli WWTP for colony

By Patricia Barrett

Although Lake Winnipeg may be further compromised if a proposed wastewater treatment lagoon is approved by the provincial government, the RM of Armstrong's reeve said they've come to an impasse over the potential use of the Gimli Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP).

Reeve Garry Wasyłowski said he and his council tried to engage Gimli council over the past year and a half, or thereabouts, to see whether the Gimli WWTP can treat waste from the new Harbour Hutterite colony (formerly called the Crystal Spring colony) located in his municipality.

Armstrong tried to "make this work," said Wasyłowski, but they were stymied by Gimli's "stalling tactics."

"Offering [the WWTP] is one thing. I'm not going to say [Gimli council] haven't offered it," said Wasyłowski. "But at the same time when it came down to find ways to get it done, Gimli stalled every which way they could."

Representatives from Crystal Spring had met with a previous iteration of Armstrong council in February 2020 to provide information about what its forthcoming colony in Armstrong would entail. In 2023, the colony submitted an application to the provincial government for a licence for a proposed wastewater lagoon, which will be built close to the Armstrong-Gimli municipal border.

The proposed lagoon has received strong opposition from residents in Armstrong and Gimli, tourism operators, Gimli council and environmental organizations, which fear it will further pollute Lake Winnipeg with additional phosphorus loading.

That's why Wasyłowski engaged colony representatives and made several attempts to engage Gimli council on an alternative treatment option while the lagoon was still being considered for approval by the province, he said. Those attempts included a joint meeting with Mike Moyes, provincial minister of environment and climate change.

But Wasyłowski said they hit an impasse with Gimli council, which had indicated it was receptive to the idea of offering its WWTP to the colony but failed to follow through by repeatedly "stalling" and has now gone radio silence.

"If they were going to offer their treatment plant — and I want to make it clear that there was no acceptance by the colony — and [Gimli] wanted the support of the RM of Armstrong, we needed to meet with the provincial

environment minister, find out what the terms were, find out the costs, the capacity and so on. Some people in government were unsure if Gimli has the capacity, but the RM of Gimli says they do," said Wasyłowski.

To that end, Wasyłowski said a joint meeting was set up with Moyes with the Gimli WWTP as "the agenda" and that this had been "agreed upon by both councils." But things went sideways at the last minute.

"The day before the meeting, we get an email from the RM of Gimli saying here's the agenda, we're going to talk about more consultation, we're going to talk about other [matters]. This was a clear tactic to stall without a doubt," said Wasyłowski. "We proceeded to set up more meetings with Gimli and they consistently cancelled them. Me and the [Armstrong] CAO, in fact, went to a meeting that [Gimli] didn't even tell us they cancelled; no one from Gimli showed up. It was clear that their intent was to stall and not move forward with this project ... and get Armstrong to go along with their stalling tactics."

His view was underscored by Gimli Mayor Kevin Chudd's presentation to the Manitoba Clean Environment Commission (CEC) last week in opposition to the colony project, he said, and by a recent CBC interview in which Chudd said the Hutterite colony will put Gimli on the hook for millions of dollars.

Gimli council also released a public communique dated April 17, a few days before the CEC hearings, in which they claimed they had not been "brought into key discussions at a time when it could have shaped the proposal."

The RM of Gimli treats the wastewater of RM of Armstrong residents (in a certain catchment area) after an agreement was struck between the two municipalities in 2022 for use of the Gimli WWTP. That wastewater is trucked to the Gimli plant.

When asked what the difference is between the wastewater generated by Armstrong residents, which Gimli's plant treats, and that which will be generated by colony residents, Wasyłowski said: "Gimli's opposed to it. They don't want to see this development go forward."

Given the delays, Wasyłowski said the opportunity to look at using the Gimli WWTP to treat the colony's wastewater may have passed.

That's despite several residents and the environmental organization Save Lake Winnipeg Project specifically asking during their public presentations to the CEC panel last week that



EXPRESS FILE PHOTO BY PATRICIA BARRETT

A sewage truck is shown at the Gimli Wastewater Treatment Plant.

the Gimli WWTP be used to treat colony wastewater rather than allow the proposed lagoon to go forward

It's unknown whether the province and the federal government would have considered helping with funding for running a pipeline from the colony to the Gimli WWTP, but that was a topic Wasyłowski said he wanted to explore.

And as a precautionary step and to "be up front" about it, Wasyłowski said Armstrong had asked Gimli if it would consider accepting "trucked" wastewater from the colony to the Gimli WWTP "should we need to use it."

"As of today [April 23] we have never heard back from Gimli," said the reeve.

As for the Gimli mayor's recent statement to CBC that the RM of Armstrong should pay for Gimli roads to the colony, Wasyłowski said the colony is a "major landowner [in the RM of Gimli], paying far more taxes to Gimli than to Armstrong." And Gimli council has use of the colony's tax dollars to repair its roads.

The *Express* reached out to the RM of Gimli, the mayor and councillors for comment.

"Decisions about wastewater servicing and major agricultural development cannot be reduced to a single infrastructure question or a yes-or-no capacity issue. As the mayor outlined in his submission to the Clean Environment Commission ... on April 22, water does not respect municipal borders, and neither do the impacts of upstream decisions," said spokesperson Christine Payne. "Long before modern governance structures, Indigenous Peoples — and later settlers — understood that when water

systems are stressed, communities downstream bear the consequences. The RM of Gimli's position is grounded in that lived reality: responsible development requires collaboration, clarity, shared responsibility and an understanding of cumulative impact before approvals move forward — not after impacts occur."

When asked if the RM had offered the colony use of the Gimli WWTP and what the response was, Payne said the RM had "participated in discussions with the RM of Armstrong council and Burns Maendel, the proponent's engineering firm, where the Gimli wastewater treatment plant was explored as a potential servicing option."

Those discussions had taken place in the "context of broader conversations about capacity, responsibility, and the downstream implications of servicing an industrial-scale operation outside Gimli's municipal boundaries," she said.

The response from the colony with regard to the option of using the WWTP was "ultimately declined," said Payne.

"Questions regarding the specific rationale for that decision are best directed to the RM of Armstrong or the proponent directly, as they are best positioned to speak to their considerations," she said.

When asked about capacity of the Gimli WWTP — specifically for a maximum of 250 more people (the maximum capacity of the colony's proposed lagoon) — Payne said questions about infrastructure upgrades, risk, regulatory compliance and so forth would have to first be consid-

CEC hearing on colony sewage lagoon raises questions about Manitoba's regulations



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY PATRICIA BARRETT

Lake Winnipeg commercial fishers Robert T. Kristjanson and his son Chris Kristjanson.

Gimli and Armstrong residents and members of Harbour Hutterite colony before the evening hearing on April 22.

By Patricia Barrett

The central question raised at the Manitoba Clean Environment Commission's (CEC) public hearing last Wednesday night was why risk potentially polluting Lake Winnipeg — the 10th largest freshwater lake on the planet — even more with a new sewage lagoon?

Residents from the municipalities of Armstrong and Gimli, environmental organizations and municipal leaders shared their views of the lagoon that the Harbour Hutterite colony (formerly the Crystal Spring colony) wants to build in the RM of Armstrong on the border of the RM of Gimli.

If approved by the province, lagoon effluent will be treated in cells, discharged to a ditch, flow into Willow Creek then flow into Lake Winnipeg at the residential subdivisions of Husavik and Siglavik.

About 100 people attended the April 22 hearing at the Fraserwood Hall, with 18 people registered to speak.

Armstrong resident Tanya Mishtak lives across the road from the proposed lagoon. In an impassioned speech, she said the lagoon would expose her family to noisome waste and result in contaminants leaching into groundwater they rely on for drinking.

"My primary concern is the health and safety of my children and family. The proposed lagoon introduces ongoing risks related to odour, insects, potential groundwater contamination, flooding and exposure to effluent," she said. "These risks did not exist prior to approvals and land-use changes permitted or enabled by municipal or provincial authorities."

She provided the CEC with photos of overland flooding along Road 106N where the colony wants to build its lagoon.

"The proposed lagoon is located in an area prone to seasonal and heavy rainfall flooding. Clay-lined lagoons are known to leak over time," said Mishtak. "The risk of overflow or leaching during spring melt or extreme rainfall events presents a serious threat to nearby wells, drainage systems, Willow Creek and downstream waters leading to Lake Winnipeg."

It's the threat to water quality in Lake Winnipeg that 92-year-old commercial fisher Robert T. Kristjanson addressed.

"When are we going to wake up and decide what is our fate in Manitoba?" said Kristjanson. "Is it clean water or do we build something else to pol-

lute the water we've got? "People here, you have to stand up and ... decide on what you want ... it's time we took control of our water."

His son Chris Kristjanson told the CEC that fishers and residents can't control what's "coming into the lake" from rivers and creeks because "we don't have control of the land."

After the hearing, he questioned why no provincial and federal politicians showed up, and where the federal government was as it's responsible for Lake Winnipeg.

"It's getting a little tiring that they don't care about Lake Winnipeg," he said, referring to the local MLA and MP. "And I think it's high time the (federal) department of fisheries and oceans ... gets involved in making decisions."

Siglavik resident Chris Milne also questioned why "DFO is not involved since Willow Creek is a navigable waterway [and] there's a current problem with the [Manitoba] government's permitting and licensing process."

Milne told the CEC there were no estimates provided by the colony's engineer of what the effluent concentration levels could be in Willow Creek and in the Lake Winnipeg wetland at Miklavik and Siglavik, which combined, have 120 families. And there was no mention about impacts on aquatic species and wildlife.

RM of Gimli resident Jeff Smith, who did not present at the hearing, said in addition to the colony's lagoon effluent entering Lake Winnipeg, the manure of 140,000 chickens the colony proposes to raise will be spread on fields in the RM of Gimli. Heavy rain or overland flooding could wash that manure into the lake.

The lagoon itself will generate 27.05 kilograms per year of phosphorus alone, according to the colony's engineer. That may be small in comparison to what agricultural activities produce, but Smith said it will, nevertheless, compound the nutrient problem in Lake Winnipeg. It already has a 4,000-tonne surplus, with contributions from U.S. states, Ontario, Manitoba and western Canada.

Furthermore, Smith said he thinks the lagoon's effluent will sit in the lake's marsh — where Willow Creek empties — as the water level there is only two to three inches deep and it's another 200 metres to the lake proper.

"They'll have a two-cell lagoon, and I'm thinking there's going to be a third cell created in or around Miklavik or Siglavik," said Smith, who helped put

pressure on environment minister Mike Moyes to order a CEC hearing. "The effluent will create a pool. It will sit and accumulate until there's a big spring flood."

Gimli Mayor Kevin Chudd presented to the CEC on behalf of council earlier that day and also attended the evening session.

Chudd said he wants to be clear that Gimli council is "not about opposing development."

"Our concern ... is not whether development should happen. It is whether development of this scale is being asked to proceed before the foundation of trust, planning and collaboration is in place," said Chudd. "This hearing is not simply about technical compliance. It is about whether we are prepared to apply science and common sense together, before approval — not after downstream impacts occur."

Armstrong Reeve Garry Wasylowski, a former chair of the Manitoba Association of Watersheds and the East Interlake Watershed District, presented on behalf of his council.

They stand behind the lagoon.

"Wastewater lagoons are the accepted standard in the Province of Manitoba. I'm unaware of the province ... introducing any new standards for wastewater lagoons. Wastewater lagoons have been approved by the province ... without going through a CEC hearing. In fact, I'm unaware of a CEC hearing ever being held on any other lagoon project in ... Manitoba," said Wasylowski.

There are numerous lagoons much closer to Lake Winnipeg, he added, including three in the RM of Gimli.

"I will go on to say that more harm is being done to the lake by shoreline development," said Wasylowski. "The destruction of coastal wetlands is reducing the lake's ability to clean itself. Do you know where the sewage from those developments are going? Into the lake."

Armstrong council is unaware of any "design flaws" in the lagoon project, he said, and the hearing is "more about stopping a colony from developing and stopping agriculture."

"These decisions have to be made on best practices and sound science, not rhetoric and innuendo," said Wasylowski in closing.

Silver Harbour representative Fred Veldink was among a number of speakers — Tanya Mishtak, Vicki Burns from Save Lake Winnipeg Project, Alex MacKenzie from Siglavik and Rob Jantz from Prairie Sea Kayaks — who said the colony should use the Gimli Wastewater Treatment Plant rather than build a lagoon.

"Lake Winnipeg is very sick. ... We are way beyond the natural ability of the lake to heal and purify itself. The evidence is clear: blue-green [algal blooms] already are becoming worse," said Veldink. "Instead of a lagoon, we propose ... the effluent ... be trucked to the Gimli treatment plant [or] pumped [to the plant] via a pipeline ... or the construction of a small on-site treatment plant ... such as the [one] ... currently being used in East St. Paul."

Randy Webber, who worked for the Manitoba government as an environment officer and taught environmental science at the University of Manitoba, said he lives about two miles from the proposed lagoon.

> LAGOON, FROM PG. 10



Gimli Mayor Kevin Chudd (left) spoke to the CEC panel earlier in the day and attended the hearing at night.

He questioned the review/approvals process, which puts the environment last.

"It struck me ... the Environment Act proposal [for the lagoon] comes after all that other stuff and my conclusion is ... there's limited opportunity for public participation [and] the environment is being considered after the development," said Webber.

He showed the CEC Google Earth photos of colony buildings constructed "in advance" of the approval of the lagoon. And that puts the environment minister in a "really challenging position because millions of dollars have been spent ... and how would the minister say, 'No, you can't go forward.'"

He added that "it isn't the [lagoon] proposal that's the problem, but the process. The Environment Act is not working."

Commercial fisher Bill Buckels described how he's been covered in feces swirling around in Lake Winnipeg during harvesting seasons. The lake is a "convenient disposal site" for high risk industrial activities such as large-scale farming operations and wastewater disposal.

"To continue permitting intensive agricultural operations, specifically industrial-scale poultry and livestock facilities, within the sensitive Interlake watershed is to ignore the fundamental physics of our landscape," said Buckels.

That landscape is one of flat topography and poor drainage. And during "high flow" events, wa-

ter moves laterally across the landscape, carrying phosphorus and nitrogen off ag fields straight into Lake Winnipeg.

"The accumulation of phosphorus from intensive livestock operations fuels the growth of cyanobacteria (blue-green algae). These blooms deplete oxygen levels, leading to massive fish kills," he said. "They also facilitate the growth of algae that coat the rocky substrates required for spawning, effectively suffocating fish eggs and altering the benthic community."

Buckels asked that the province implement a "moratorium" on all new and expanding intensive livestock operations located within 30 kilometres of the Lake Winnipeg watershed.

He also questioned why the province hadn't sought Indigenous representation on the colony project.

RM of Gimli resident Andy Damm, who attended the hearing, said the protection of our water comes down to the provincial government, which needs to have rigorous environmental standards and prevent friction from arising between different industries.

"It's quite evident that the issue does not in itself lie with Crystal Spring/Harbour colony: it lies with the inadequate environmental regulations within the province. It's a systemic government failure on all levels from lack of communication between the municipalities right up to not taking into account cumulative nutrient loading throughout the province," said Damm.

"It pits neighbour against neighbour, municipality against municipality. How do we ... have the larger conversation about cleaning up our environment with the agricultural sector and [Americans] if we can't clean up our own back yard? Do we have to wait until our watershed is destroyed before we act? In the future, wars will be fought over water and we as a people can't take the steps forward to protect our precious water resources."

Willow Island resident Norma Bailey, who attended the hearing, said she was unhappy with one of the speakers who implied that residents are opposed to the Hutterites.

"I jumped up at the very end of the hearing to comment on one of the speakers who insinuated we were against Hutterites," said Bailey. "I said I was offended by the suggestion that just because we wanted to save our lake, didn't mean that we didn't want Hutterites in our community."

She said she told the Hutterites sitting at the back of the room that they're "welcome in our community, but don't hurt our lake."

"I [didn't want] this very important issue to get framed as a fight by locals against newcomers," she said. "The issue is controlling what's going into the lake — and that's the government's responsibility. It's the fault of the government that the colony was given a green light, not the colony's."

The CEC will forward its recommendations to the province, which will decide on whether to approve the lagoon.

The Express asked the province why there was no Indigenous consultation and whether it will consider implementing a 30-kilometre buffer.

"We always want to hear from Manitobans, which is why there are public comment periods for all environment act proposals and why, in this case, we requested a Clean Environment Commission hearing to better understand the concerns of those affected," said environment minister Mike Moyes. "These processes are open to all affected Manitobans. I look forward to receiving the CEC's report that will include recommendations and other issues brought up at the hearing, with an eye to make a decision that ensures the long-term health of Lake Winnipeg."

The federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans said it's involved with the lagoon project with regard to the impacts on fish and fish habitat.

"In response to concerns related to early construction activities, DFO completed site visits in April 2024 and October 2025, and may conduct further follow-ups, as appropriate," said media relations spokesperson Tomie White.

Environment and Climate Change Canada media relations spokesperson Eleni Armenakis said the Wastewater Systems Effluent Regulations under the federal Fisheries Act reduce threats to fish, fish habitat and human health by authorizing the release of wastewater under strict conditions.

"Once completed, if the proposed wastewater lagoon in the Harbour Hutterite Colony is subject to the federal regulations, any effluent released must meet the effluent quality standards as well as the ongoing monitoring and reporting requirements," said Armenakis. "In addition to federal authorities, provincial governments typically issue licences or permits to establish and operate wastewater systems and have standards in place for wastewater effluent in addition to federal regulations."

Fashion, food and fundraising at Arborg Spring Tea May 7

By E. Antonio

The Arborg Legion Ladies Auxiliary Spring Tea and Fashion Show returns this year as a beloved annual fundraiser supporting local initiatives.

The event will take place Thursday, May 7 at the Arborg Legion, with doors opening at 6 p.m. and the fashion show beginning at 7.

Board president Marlene Taylor said the event has been a longstanding tradition, bringing the community together for more than 20 years.

"The community gives so much to us, and we like to give back to them when we can," she said.

This year's show will feature 18 local models, many of whom have tak-

en part year after year.

Funds raised by the auxiliary are distributed to a variety of local groups, based on an ongoing list of community needs. Proceeds from this year's event will support two \$500 scholarships for graduating students at Arborg Collegiate, provide supplies for Riverdale Place Workshop and contribute to events such as Arborg Street Fest and the Arborg Fair and Rodeo. A portion of the funds will also be donated to the Arborg and District Christmas Cheer Board later in the year.

Over the course of the evening, guests can enjoy a range of outfits styled with clothing from Johnson's

Fashion and Footwear, along with raffle prizes, a silent auction and a selection of eats prepared by volunteers, including sandwiches, dainties, fruit and cheese trays.

Tickets are \$10 per person and will be available at the door.

> TREATMENT PLANT, FROM PG. 9

ered.

"That determination cannot be made in the absence of a detailed technical and operational assessment. Evaluating potential capacity would require close collaboration between the RM of Gimli, its wastewater operators and the proponent's engineers to understand

system impacts, infrastructure upgrades, operational risk, regulatory compliance and long-term implications for ratepayers and downstream systems," she said. "Until that work is completed, it would be inappropriate to draw conclusions about capacity."

Call open for Canada's Volunteer Awards nominations

By Annaliese Meier

Manitobans are being encouraged to recognize the people and organizations making a difference in their communities as nominations open for the 2026 Canada's Volunteer Awards.

The national program celebrates volunteerism across the country, with nominations open from April 22 to June 17.

Brenda Martinussen, a federally appointed member of the program's National Advisory Committee, said the nomination process plays a key role in ensuring Manitoba's volunteer efforts are recognized on a national stage.

"It's important for Manitobans to nominate individuals and organizations because nominations are how Manitoba's volunteer leadership is recognized nationally," she said. "Many contributions are done quietly, and people are only celebrated if someone takes the time to tell their story well."

The awards are open to individuals, groups, businesses, non-profit organizations and charities that have made a meaningful contribution to addressing social challenges in their communities. Individual nominees must be at least 18 years old and be Canadian citizens or permanent residents, while an Emerging Leader category recognizes those aged 18 to 30.

Martinussen said some of the strongest nominations are those that clearly outline both the volunteer's role and the impact of their work.

"The strongest nominations make it easy to understand what the nominee actually did — whether they organized an initiative, mobilized others or mentored people — and then back it up with concrete results," she said.

She added that strong submissions clearly describe the need being addressed, who benefited and how widely the impact was felt, while also highlighting challenges such as limited resources, geography or stigma. Nominations that demonstrate sustained impact, partnerships or programs that can be replicated tend to stand out.

The Canada's Volunteer Awards program includes 21 awards, including the national Thérèse Casgrain Lifelong Achievement Award for individuals with more than 20 years of service, as well as 20 regional awards presented across five regions, including the Prairies.

Regional awards are presented in four categories: Community Leader, Emerging Leader, Business Leader and Social Innovator.

While Martinussen said she could not speak to specific statistics, she believes Manitoba could be better represented in nominations.

"I would like to see more representation from Manitoba," she said. "Sometimes people feel they need to be from large urban centres to have reach and impact, but that's not true. Often the biggest impact is in smaller or rural communities where resources are limited."



She said a lack of awareness about the awards, along with the time required to prepare nominations, may also contribute to fewer submissions. In many cases, volunteers are focused on their work rather than seeking recognition, and may not see themselves as award-worthy.

For those unsure whether someone is "worthy" of being nominated, Martinussen said to move forward anyway.

"Often the people who feel the least worthy are the ones doing the work most quietly and consistently," she said. "These awards are about meeting a real need and making a meaningful difference, whether that's in a small community or within one organization."

Beyond recognition, the awards can have a lasting impact on recipients and their communities.

"Recognition can boost morale, raise the profile of an issue and open doors to new partnerships and volunteers," Martinussen said, noting recipients can also direct grant funding of \$5,000 to \$10,000 to a non-profit organization of their choice.

She added that the benefits often

extend well beyond the individual recipient, helping organizations grow their volunteer base, strengthen partnerships and support future fundraising efforts.

To submit a nomination, applicants must complete an online form and include between one and three letters of support from individuals with direct knowledge of the nominee's contributions.

Martinussen encourages nominators to be clear and specific, tying submissions closely to the program's criteria and including measurable examples wherever possible.

"A strong nomination is clear, specific and backed by real examples," she said. "Explain what they did, who benefited and what changed."

Virtual information sessions will be held May 20 (English) and May 21 (French) to help guide applicants through the process.

"Ultimately, nominating doesn't just celebrate one person or group — it strengthens a culture of service by showing volunteers that their time and impact truly matter," Martinussen said.

Manitoba, Ottawa boost wages for child-care workers

By Annaliese Meier

Early childhood educators in Manitoba are seeing significant wage gains as part of a joint federal-provincial effort to strengthen the child-care system and expand access for families.

The governments of Canada and Manitoba announced that wage increases introduced through a new provincial wage grid have boosted pay for early childhood educators (ECEs) by as much as \$7 per hour over the past two years, depending on certification level and facility size. The updated wage grid took effect April 1.

Manitoba Education and Early Childhood Learning Minister Tracy Schmidt said the increases are part of a broader strategy aimed at growing the workforce and supporting the expansion of licensed child-care spaces.

"The Manitoba government is de-

livering more high-quality child care for families across the province for children up to age 12," Schmidt said in a release, noting that nearly 1,200 additional educators have joined the sector.

The wage enhancements apply to ECEs, child-care assistants and home-based providers working in licensed and funded facilities. They build on previous increases introduced to address long-standing wage gaps in the sector.

Federal Secretary of State for Children and Youth Anna Gainey said the investment reflects a continued commitment to strengthening early learning and child care across the country.

In addition to wage increases, the province will provide a two per cent funding boost — totalling \$14.3 million — to support wages at licensed facilities. Base operating grants will

also rise by one per cent, adding \$4.7 million to help centres manage day-to-day costs.

Sector leaders say the funding is critical to stabilizing the workforce.

Jodie Kehl, executive director of the Manitoba Child Care Association, said competitive wages are key to improving retention and maintaining quality care.

"Fair and competitive compensation is essential to stabilizing the workforce, strengthening retention and sustaining high-quality early learning and child care," she said.

The announcement also includes more than \$14 million over two years to extend training programs at five post-secondary institutions, supporting 327 expanded seats for ECE students. The funding builds on a previous \$24-million investment made in 2023 to grow training capacity.

Officials say expanding training opportunities is necessary to meet growing demand for child-care spaces across Manitoba.

The investments are part of the Canada-Manitoba Canada-Wide Early Learning and Child Care Agreement, first signed in 2021. Under the agreement, Ottawa committed approximately \$1.2 billion over five years to reduce parent fees to an average of \$10 per day and increase access to licensed care. A 2025 extension added \$1.9 billion in funding through 2031.

Government officials say the combined measures — higher wages, increased operating funding and expanded training — are intended to ensure child care remains accessible, affordable and sustainable for Manitoba families.

Five generations captured in special family moment

By E. Antonio

A local family is celebrating a rare and meaningful milestone after gathering five generations together for a photo — something they hadn't experienced in more than 30 years.

Michelle Wierda said the opportunity to capture the moment with her grandfather — her Opa — was deeply significant.

"It was a privilege to have the honour of five generations. I felt blessed that my Opa is still here with us," she said.

Her grandfather, Jake VanNus, was overjoyed by the experience, especially meeting the family's newest addition, six-week-old Malakai.

"He was so excited and kept saying 'wow.' He loves babies and kept asking for the baby," Wierda said.

VanNus, who immigrated to Canada from Holland after the Second World War, has long shared stories of perseverance with his family — growing up, he was number six of nine children (six boys and three girls) in a small apartment, surviving on meagre food, and later helping build parts of Winnipeg after arriving in Canada.

Wierda said those stories have helped shape how younger generations understand their roots.

"Our family's history is a testament to courage, perseverance and the importance of family. With love and support, we can do anything," she said.

Including Malakai in the photo added another layer of meaning. His name, she noted, translates to "My Messenger," symbolizing resilience



Jake VanNus — also known as Dad, Opa and great-grandpa — enjoys using plastic canvas and yarn to create images. This is one of his most recent pieces.

and carrying family values forward.

"It symbolizes persevering, adjusting, making the best of what you have been given and always loving," she said.

The day itself was filled with laughter and reflection, with VanNus proudly sharing his latest hobby — plastic canvas creations — and enjoying time with his growing family.

Wierda hopes the moment leaves a lasting impression.

"The world around us will be forever changing, but our family is a safe place to land, and we are here for each other — even five generations worth," she added.



EXPRESS PHOTOS SUBMITTED

A Gimli family experienced a first in three decades — five generations in one photo. Pictured are Jake VanNus, 94; Nelly Wierda, 71; Michelle Wierda, 51; Isaiah Ruzik, 29; and baby Malakai Kennedy-Ruzic.

Join CPAWS for free group hike and wildlife photo walk at Narcisse Snake Dens

By Jennifer McFee

Spring has sprung, which means the birds are chirping, the grass is greening and the snakes are slithering.

On Saturday, May 2, all are welcome to join a free 3.2-kilometre hike at the Narcisse Snake Dens, hosted by the Manitoba chapter of Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society (CPAWS). The event runs from 11 a.m. to noon.

CPAWS Manitoba is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to protecting Manitoba's lands and waters for future generations.

"Founded in 1991, we are proudly built in Manitoba and committed to making sure the voice of conservation is heard on issues that affect our parks, wild spaces and natural heritage," said Katie Borgfjord, digital marketing co-ordinator for the Manitoba chapter.

"Along with protecting nature, we help connect to nature through our Nature Club and Outdoor Education program."

The Narcisse Snake Dens are a spectacular site in Manitoba, she added.

"It is the largest snake den in the world. The

snakes spend the winters hibernating in the limestone rocks and come out to mate in spring," she said.

"This is the best time to view the snakes. On the hike, you can expect a fun day out in nature. We will have volunteers to help guide your walk and chat a bit about the snakes."

Group hikes are a perfect outing for families and people new to the area.

"With a CPAWS hike, you can get out in nature with the safety of being in a group, and being near people trained in first aid, while connecting with nature and making some new friends," she said.

"You also have the opportunity to sign a postcard to help protect lands and waters, like the Interlake."

In addition to the hike, this year CPAWS is also offering a new event — a wildlife photo walk at the snake dens on Saturday, May 2 from noon to 1 p.m. Registration is separate from the regular group hike.

"This is in collaboration with photographer April Carandang," Borgfjord said.

"She will be taking us through a relaxed beginner guide for photographing wildlife and how to get



PHOTO SUBMITTED

Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society is hosting a free group hike and wildlife photography walk at Narcisse Snake Dens on Saturday, May 2.

the best shots."

Throughout the summer, CPAWS continues to of-

Continued on page 14

Six arrested after firearm complaint in Pinaymootang

Gypsumville RCMP seize handgun, drugs following incident at gas bar

By Haley Cvar

Gypsumville RCMP have arrested six individuals following a weapons complaint in Pinaymootang First Nation on April 24.

Police said officers were called at approximately 8:45 p.m. after receiving a report that occupants of a vehicle had pointed a firearm at a victim near the community's gas bar.

According to RCMP, the vehicle remained at the location, allowing officers to respond quickly and conduct a traffic stop upon arrival.

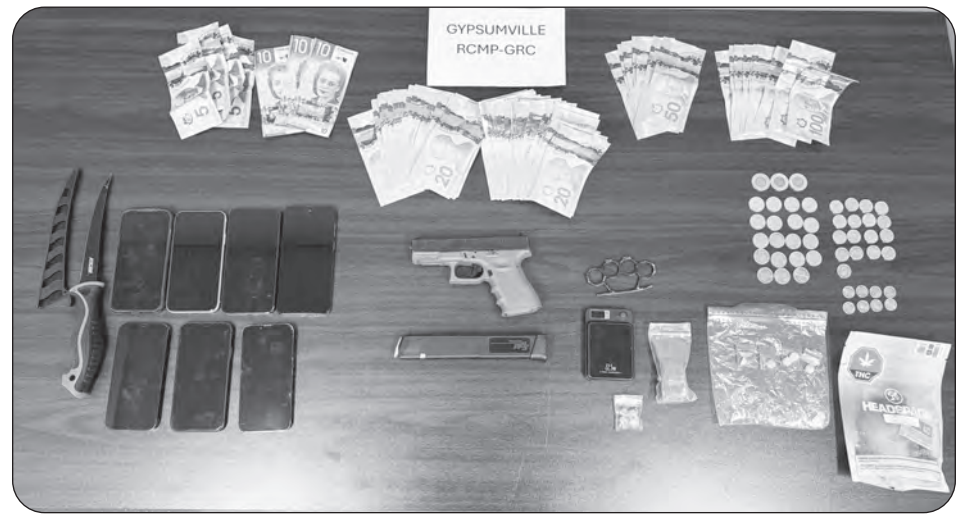
The driver, a female passenger and four male passengers exited the vehicle and were arrested without incident.

A subsequent search of the vehicle resulted in the seizure of a 9-mm

handgun with a loaded magazine, additional ammunition, cocaine, drug paraphernalia and Canadian currency.

Anthony Timmerman, 20, of the RM of West St. Paul, faces multiple charges, including possession of a weapon contrary to a prohibition order, unauthorized possession of a firearm, possession of a prohibited weapon, unsafe storage of a firearm, possession of a weapon for a dangerous purpose, pointing a firearm, possession for the purpose of trafficking, careless use of a firearm and possession of a firearm, weapon or ammunition in a motor vehicle.

Kara Williams-Thomas, 28, of Manigotagan, faces similar weapons- and drug-related charges. The



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Six people were arrested after Gypsumville RCMP seized a loaded handgun, drugs and cash during a traffic stop in Pinaymootang First Nation on April 24.

four remaining male passengers — an 18-year-old from Black River and three individuals from Winnipeg aged 14, 16 and 20 — also face compa-

rable charges.

All six accused were remanded into custody.

Gypsumville RCMP continue to investigate.

Fisher Branch RCMP make arrests after armed robbery near Hodgson

By Haley Cvar

Two Winnipeg residents have been charged following a violent armed robbery south of Hodgson that left a local man with life-threatening injuries.

Royal Canadian Mounted Police in Fisher Branch said officers responded April 16 at 7:35 p.m. to a report of a robbery with a firearm on Highway 17 North in the Rural Municipality of Fisher.

Police said three suspects assaulted a 59-year-old man, stole his truck and threatened to kill him with a sawed-off shotgun.

Officers patrolled the area in an at-

tempt to locate the suspects and the stolen vehicle but were unsuccessful. When police later attended the victim's residence, they found him in medical distress and transported him to a local hospital before he was transferred by ambulance to a Winnipeg hospital.

Investigators determined the attack followed an earlier incident involving the suspects and another woman. Police said the victim confronted the suspects, who then assaulted him with a baseball bat and a Taser, kicked him and pointed a sawed-off shotgun while issuing death threats. The sus-

pects then fled in the victim's truck, leaving him to walk home.

An arrest warrant was issued for two suspects identified as Stino Mukendi, 36, and Dana Sinclair, 36, both of Winnipeg.

On April 21 at approximately 4:20 p.m., officers with the Manitoba Integrated Violent Offender Apprehension Unit located and arrested the pair at a Winnipeg residence without incident.

Mukendi and Sinclair face multiple charges, including aggravated assault, robbery with a firearm, assault with a weapon, using a firearm in the

commission of an offence, pointing a firearm, uttering threats and several weapons-related offences.

Police said the victim has since stabilized and is recovering in hospital.

A third suspect, described as a female with rotten front teeth, remains outstanding.

Fisher Branch RCMP are asking anyone with information about the incident or the identity of the third suspect to contact the detachment at 204-372-8484, call Crime Stoppers anonymously at 1-800-222-8477 or submit a tip online.

The investigation is ongoing.

Gimli RCMP arrest male after firearm incident involving stolen vehicle

By Haley Cvar

On April 21 at 12:30 a.m., Gimli RCMP were notified that a male suspect had stolen a vehicle from an acquaintance and later pointed a handgun at the victim.

Police were advised that the suspect, who is known to the victim, had taken her vehicle without permission from a business where it was being repaired.

While travelling in another vehicle between Gimli and Winnipeg Beach, the owner came across her stolen vehicle and began following it. The suspect then turned around, drove toward the victim, and pointed a firearm at her and the vehicle's other occupants. The victim then left the area

and contacted police.

At 2:15 a.m., Gimli RCMP located the stolen vehicle parked at a residence in the RM of Gimli. The suspect, 30-year-old Mackenzie Sabel, was arrested without incident.

Sabel was found to be in breach of a conditional sentence order and was remanded into custody on the following additional charges:

- Assault with a weapon
- Careless use of a firearm
- Operation while prohibited
- Pointing a firearm
- Possession of a firearm knowing it is unauthorized
- Possession of a firearm in a motor vehicle
- Possession of property obtained

by crime over \$5,000

- Possession of a restricted firearm without a licence
- Possession of a weapon for a dangerous purpose

- Using a firearm in the commission of an offence
- Weapon possession contrary to an order

Gimli RCMP continue to investigate.

> NARCISSE, FROM PG. 13

fer events for all to enjoy.

"As a part of our Nature Club, we host many events all summer to help connect people to nature. On Tuesdays in the summer, we have nature workshops at Crescent Drive Park in Winnipeg. On Wednesdays, we have paddle nights on Churchill Drive," Borgfjord said.

"Every first Saturday of the month, we have a free group hike. In the Interlake, we have a group hike in Stony Mountain on Oct. 3. Remember that CPAWS Manitoba is your source to get outside."

To see all the events and to register, visit <https://cpawsemb.org/nature-club-events/>.

Craft sale to showcase creativity, community spirit at Gimli New Horizons

By E. Antonio

The Gimli New Horizons Activity Centre is preparing to welcome visitors for its annual Craft and Bake Sale on Saturday, May 2, with organizers promising a full day of shopping, community connection and local talent.

Running from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., the event will feature more than 50 vendors, a bake sale, canteen, silent auction and free admission, giving residents and visitors alike a chance to explore a wide range of handmade goods and treats.

Organizer Cathy Timko said one of the most rewarding parts of the event is seeing the excitement it brings to both vendors and visitors.

“Watching the vendors set up and the anticipation of the doors opening creates a buzz that is contagious among our volunteers,” she said, adding the energy extends throughout the centre, from the front reception area to the canteen, as volunteers take pride in welcoming the community into the facility.

“Everyone from the front reception area to the canteen is smiling and so proud to have the community come into our facility and see what a wonderful venue it is.”

Beyond shopping, the event also offers an opportunity to introduce residents to the New Horizons centre itself and the programs it offers.

Timko noted that many visitors — whether longtime residents or newcomers to Gimli — are visiting the facility for the first time during the sale.

This year’s sale will bring together vendors from across the region, including Gimli, Winnipeg, Lac du Bonnet, Selkirk and surrounding communities.

Among the featured vendors are returning seller Susan Haire, who writes under the pen name Maureen Castell, and first-time vendor Neil Sander.

Haire, a published and award-winning author, will be showcasing her popular Viking fantasy series. Known for adding a unique touch to her table, she also appears in a



traditional Icelandic settler outfit, reflecting the region’s heritage and helping draw visitors into her literary world.

Having some Icelandic heritage herself, Haire said writing allows her to become immersed in another world, and she hopes her readers experience the same. She published her first book, *The Viking Who Fell Through Time*, in 2022 and went on to release three additional novels in the series annually through 2025. The series is now complete.

Always having a knack for writing, she said retiring just before the pandemic gave her the time she needed to pursue it.

“It felt like it was right to settle down and finally get to writing,” she said. “Once COVID came, I had more than enough time to get them done.”

Her novels are written for adult audiences, with mature themes throughout. Describing the four-book collection as a “romantasy,” she said readers can expect to explore other worlds while following a romantic storyline that incorporates elements of history.

She said she looks forward to attending the sale because it offers an opportunity to connect with others.

Sander, meanwhile, will be bringing handcrafted Shaker-style oval boxes made using traditional methods. Once valued for practical household uses before the advent of modern materials such as tin and plastic, the boxes are now often sought after as decorative storage pieces for items ranging from sewing supplies to baked goods.

Sander grew up in Gimli but has since moved to Winnipeg.

“My craft is pretty unique here in Manitoba,” he said. “To my knowledge, I am the only crafter doing this.”

Inspired by a woodworking friend who introduced him to the boxes nearly 20 years ago, he has since made about 400 Shaker-style boxes.

Following traditional techniques, he sources wood — typically cherry, walnut or maple — from friends or family, then slices it



Susan Haire — who writes under the pen name Maureen Castell — is an award-winning author of a Viking-themed romantasy series. She will have her books for sale at the Gimli New Horizons Annual Craft and Bake Sale on May 2.

into thin, nearly pliable pieces. He soaks the wood in water for approximately 30 minutes before bending it into shape. Afterward, it dries for 24 hours before he installs a lid and bottom plank using copper tacks. Each box is finished with a thin layer of Minwax satin wood finish.

He said he enjoys the simplicity of the craft.

“I like working with wood,” he added. “It’s satisfying.”

He is looking forward to visiting Gimli and connecting with customers, helping them find a simple, unique and functional box for their needs.

Saturday’s event will also include a silent auction featuring donations from each vendor, along with a canteen serving snacks and light lunch items.

Timko said the decision to keep admission free is intentional.

“There is no admission charge for our craft show — we prefer our visitors to leave their money with the vendors.”

With dozens of vendors and a wide variety of handmade items on display, organizers hope the event will continue to celebrate local craftsmanship while bringing the community together under one roof.

The Gimli New Horizons Activity Centre is located at 17 Loni Beach Rd.

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SATURDAY • MAY 2
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 FREE ADMISSION • CANTEEN • SILENT AUCTION



EXPRESS PHOTOS SUBMITTED
 Neil Sander makes Shaker-style oval boxes and will be selling his creations at the Gimli New Horizons Annual Craft and Bake Sale on May 2.

Arborg, Bifrost-Riverton, Fisher dodge severe flooding last week, but weather unpredictable

By Patricia Barrett

The Town of Arborg, the Municipality of Bifrost-Riverton and the RM of Fisher experienced some flooding last week after rivers rose and excess moisture on fields spilled across roads and surrounded some structures, but for now they dodged a bullet.

Warren Toderan, a retired conservation officer who is the municipal emergency coordinator (MEC) for the three municipalities, said last Friday they were relatively lucky over the course of the week. But Mother Nature can be unpredictable in the weeks to come.

That said, his catchment area is well prepared to respond to emergencies.

“Our towns and municipalities are well prepared. They’ve been through the worst times. We prepared according to what the 2022 flood-prediction levels were. The way it’s going right now with the drop in the water we’re seeing, this is great news for the Town of Arborg; the water dropped overnight 0.1 metres at the bridge in town,” said Toderan, who has also worked on the fire line during Manitoba’s devastating fires in 2025.

“And the rain and snow that was predicted [last week] has not shown up. We dodged that bullet. Our basins are now able to naturally draw down



EXPRESS PHOTO BY CORRINE EINARSSON AND RM OF FISHER AND ARBORG FACEBOOK

Water levels on the Icelandic River at the Arborg bridge dropped 0.1 metres overnight on Friday, offering encouraging signs for the Town of Arborg as levels continue to recede. Left photo: Manitoba Transportation & Infrastructure moved ice along the river Thursday into the wee hours.

and all the ice chunks on the Icelandic River east of Riverton are gone, letting the water flow freely into Lake Winnipeg.”

Toderan shared details of the flooding (current as of April 24) in his three catchment areas.

In the Municipality of Bifrost-Riverton, Toderan said there was one threatened home that had tiger dams installed around it. The municipal-

ity has had to attend to washed-out roads. And excavators were stationed at all the bridges over the Icelandic to prevent ice jams.

The northern Interlake region experienced considerable snowfall in the past month or so, which is contributing to excess moisture levels on some fields and in the Icelandic River. The river flows west to east through Bifrost-Riverton and Arborg, and drains

into Lake Winnipeg at the town of Riverton.

“Everything funnels to the Icelandic River and that takes it to the lake,” said Toderan. “What we’re seeing now is the result that, but there’s still a lot more water to come.”

Bifrost-Riverton has sent excavators to every bridge along the Icelandic to break up ice chunks underneath the bridge.

“They’re all cleared as of today. But if more ice chunks accumulate under a bridge, they’ll block the flow and the water will back up,” he said.

In the Town of Arborg, there were no homes that needed to be protected with flood-mitigation equipment such as tiger dams, he said. But water was coming into some yards along the riverbank.

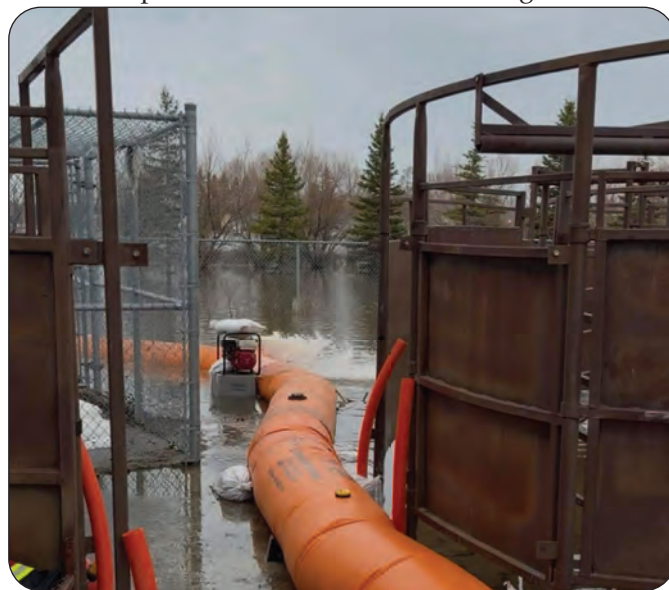
“There are a few garden sheds and garages that will get water along the Icelandic River in town. The homeowners know this as they’ve dealt with it in the past in 2014 and 2022, and they aren’t too concerned by it — unless there’s really heavy ice flow,” said Toderan. “Typically, in that area there isn’t because the ice forms east towards Lake Winnipeg.”

Arborg homeowners in town are not “pushing panic buttons” because they’re experienced with flooding and are well prepared with their sump pumps. They know what water level can seriously impact their properties, and as long as Mother Nature doesn’t “increase the heat,” they’ll be safe.

“What we can’t prepare for is when water backs up against the bridges then spills over the banks. If that happens in town, we’ll be in big trouble,” said Toderan. “The Arborg water plant is on the river, the hospital is on



RM of Fisher CAO expressed thanks to emergency crews, municipal staff and volunteers as they respond to flooding in the Fisher Branch area, where rising water continues to impact roads and infrastructure.



Floodwater surrounds the Fisher Branch veterinary clinic as emergency pumping equipment is used to keep water from entering the building.

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> FLOOD, FROM PG. 16

the river and they could get hit. But everyone's prepared."

To prevent damage to infrastructure, the town weighted down manhole covers throughout Arborg with sandbags so that they don't "blow" from the pressure of rising water. And the town also ensured that the backup generator at the water plant is ready to go in the instance of a power outage.

As a MEC, Toderan keeps a close eye on the province's predicted water levels and is in contact with the provincial Emergency Measures Organization, the provincial department of transportation and infrastructure, and the fire commissioner's office.

In 2019 when there was a widespread power outage from a storm in the Interlake, and in 2022 when there was severe flooding, both offices in Arborg and Fisher Branch were "really busy," and Toderan said they opened an emergency operations centre to deal with the crises. That operated smoothly because of the "trained and educated staff" within all three municipalities. They're trained on emergency management procedures, and everyone has been "through the wash," so to speak.

"Everyone has given us the information we need and told us what to expect right now. And the municipalities have put their [emergency] plans

into effect," said Toderan.

As far as Riverton goes, it was okay as of April 24, said Toderan. The water level on the Icelandic dropped overnight and the river is ice-free and "wide open" all the way down to the lake.

"There's still ice on the banks and there are snowbanks, but that will just end up melting," he said.

Things were a little more severe in the RM of Fisher; it was hit harder than Arborg and Bifrost-Riverton.

Fisher declared a state of emergency on April 21, and there will have to be major repairs carried out after the flooding subsides, he said.

The Fisher River flows on a natural northeast course through the Fisher municipality, as well as other jurisdictions north of the RM, and drains into Lake Winnipeg.

About 10 homes and businesses in the RM had to be protected with tiger dams and sandbags, said Toderan.

"They've had to deal with lots of roads throughout the RM that water flowed over and which potentially washed some of them out, and [high flows] on natural drains, and on municipal and provincial drains," he said. "And they've had to deal with excess water on fields."

In Fisher Branch itself, the water level on the Fisher River is very high. The veterinary clinic on Highway 17 and PR 233 (Tache Street) and the One-Stop Food & Gas beside it have

had water surround them.

"They deployed tiger dams around those two buildings, but water is seeping through the tubes into the vet clinic," said Toderan. "The excess water from fields and ditches typically run to that corner and drain into the Fisher River system. There's just too much water from the snowpack, and everything melted quickly. The same thing happened in 2022; we dealt with the same event at that corner."

Fire department staff and their volunteers have a pump inside the tiger dam around the vet clinic to pump out the water from inside the dam to try to minimise seepage.

Highway 17 and PR 233 themselves are not affected by the flooding. And the water level subsided overnight (April 23-24), which is a bit of good news.

If Mother Nature continues to cooperate, the situation should abate.

"I'm crossing my fingers. I'm not letting my guard down, though. Neither is the RM of Fisher staff and the fire department," said Toderan.

He reiterated that the flooding right now is not expected to reach the magnitude it had in 2022. But



if there's a change in the weather and things get worse, he can "call in" for additional help as he's part of the Manitoba Association of Municipal Emergency Coordinators.

"I can call on the MEC from Gimli-Winnipeg Beach-Armstrong, Don Emes, and he'd come in and we've split up this area. I'd take one municipality, he'd take another and we'd call in another MEC from elsewhere," said Toderan. "We have working agreements: all I have to do is make a phone call and the help will be there."

Mother's Day Brunch
Sunday, May 10, 2026
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Spring Home & Garden Guide



Spring planting season begins across Manitoba

By Annaliese Meier

As warmer temperatures begin to return across Manitoba, many gardeners are eager to get back outside and start planting. While the temptation to jump into full-scale gardening is strong, local experts say timing and patience are key to a successful growing season.

With frost still a possibility well into late May across much of the province, early-season work should focus on preparation rather than planting.

"It is best to stay out of the garden until it's dried on top," said Charlie Loewen, owner of Friendly Flowers in Arborg. "Working in wet soil will make it quite lumpy and hard to work with throughout the season."

Once conditions are right, gardeners can begin by clearing debris and adding compost to replenish nutrients lost over the winter months. However, when it comes to planting, options remain limited early in the season.

"Peas are really the only thing that can go in this early," Loewen said, noting that many other crops require warmer soil to establish properly.

Despite the eagerness to get started, planting too soon remains one of the most common mistakes.

"Planting tender plants too early before the soil is warm enough means you end up having to cover them on frosty nights," he said.

Instead, gardeners are encouraged to gradually acclimate plants through a process known as hardening off — moving them outdoors during the day and bringing them into a garage or sheltered space overnight when frost is still a risk.

"It's best to wait until the soil has warmed up a bit more and plants are more hardy. They will do much bet-



Onion sets are among the first crops Manitobans can plant each spring, since they tolerate cooler soil conditions and early-season weather.

ter," Loewen added, emphasizing that late May frost is typical in Manitoba.

At local garden centres, early-season demand is already taking shape, with peas and onions among the most sought-after items.

"Peas and onions are the first thing that people will put in their garden," Loewen said.

Annual flowers and hanging baskets, while popular this time of year, should still be introduced gradually. Many varieties are sensitive to frost and should either be kept indoors overnight or planted after the risk of frost has passed.

Perennials are generally more resilient and can often be planted earlier, while trees and shrubs also benefit from spring planting, giving their root systems time to establish before the heat of summer.

Gardeners are encouraged to monitor weather forecasts closely and be prepared to protect plants from unexpected cold snaps. Covering plants overnight or bringing containers indoors can help prevent damage and



EXPRESS FILE PHOTOS

Colourful hanging baskets brighten garden centres this time of year, but many varieties should be protected from frost and introduced gradually as temperatures warm.

support healthy growth.

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Coldwell council eyes infrastructure priorities, allocates transit funding

By E. Antonio

The Rural Municipality of Coldwell is weighing key infrastructure priorities for the year ahead while directing new funding toward accessible transportation and flagging a series of road and drainage concerns requiring attention.

During its April 10 meeting, council discussed ongoing planning for future sewer improvements and noted that funding under its Strategic Infrastructure program must be allocated by the end of 2026, putting added focus on upcoming capital decisions.

Chief administrative officer Nicole Christensen said this year's infrastructure priorities include firefighter turnout gear, office washroom renovations, waste disposal grounds upgrades, equipment shop expansions and LUD of Lunder Main Street sidewalk replacement. She added municipalities received a per capita grant of \$100,700 to support infrastructure needs.

Several infrastructure issues were also identified across the municipality, including damaged or plugged culverts, drainage concerns along multiple roads and areas requiring ditch maintenance. Council indicated

some of the work will need to be addressed within the current year.

"We have been approved for funding to do a study that will help guide council in making the decision of necessary improvements to allow for growth," Christensen added. "However, we already know that one area needs a line upgrade and council hopes that this will happen this year if the tenders come in within budget."

She noted the municipality has reserves set aside for sewer-related projects, while road and culvert repairs are accounted for in the annual transportation budget.

A draft of the municipality's next budget is now available, with a public hearing scheduled for May 1.

On the funding side, the municipality confirmed it has received support through the Mobility Disadvantaged Transportation Program for 2024 and part of 2025. Council approved transferring \$9,403.10 into its Handivan reserve to support future vehicle replacement.

Christensen added there is no set timeline for replacement, but council is taking a proactive approach in case of urgent need. The current van is from 2017 and is in great shape.

Council also approved more than \$146,000 in combined payroll and accounts payable for the period from March 20 to April 9.

In a regional matter, council voted to support Ducks Unlimited's proposal to replace culverts as part of the Vestfold project, noting the changes are not expected to impact water levels or drainage for neighbouring municipalities.

Several policy and planning items remain under review. Council discussed updates to its animal control bylaw, including simplified rates, and began exploring potential incentive programs, though no decisions have been finalized.

"Bylaw has not been renewed since 2004 and rates and pound keeper responsibilities are outdated," Christensen said. "Every once in while we need to refer to the bylaw to get people to contain their animals therefore needed updated information to reflect today's world."

Possible incentive programs would focus on encouraging development

on existing vacant lots, provided no additional road or sewer extensions are required. Council continues to explore options aimed at supporting growth in the community.

The municipality also reaffirmed its ongoing support for local initiatives, including the annual agricultural fair and Lunder graduation events. Council agreed to continue sponsoring the community pancake breakfast and approved \$1,500 annually toward the grad supper.

Meanwhile, a letter will be sent to the province advocating for an extended operating season at Lunder Beach Provincial Park campground, with council noting that favourable weather often continues into October despite a September closure.

Christensen said the province shared the early closure is required to ensure the campground is able to be fully winterized before the annual freeze.

Council also approved shifting its June meeting to June 19 to accommodate the local fair.

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A novel way to celebrate Earth Day



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Lunder Early Years School kindergarten students show off the books they selected during a school-wide Earth Day book exchange on April 22. Students donated gently used books earlier this year during I Love to Read Month, which were sorted by high school students Sofie Lavallee and Gabryel Ryden before being redistributed to classmates.

Grahamdale to hold hearing on proposed 47-lot Steep Rock subdivision May 28

By E. Antonio

A public hearing has been scheduled to consider a proposed amendment to the development plan in the Rural Municipality of Grahamdale that could affect land use near Steep Rock.

The hearing will take place May 28 at 10 a.m. in council chambers in Moosehorn.

The proposed bylaw (No. 1101-2026) would redesignate portions of two parcels of land. Part of SE ¼ 11-29-10W would change from "Parks, Recreation and Open Space Area" to "Lake Residential Area" to accommodate an approximately 47-lot subdivision, while part of SW ¼ 14-29-10W would shift from "Lake Residential Area" to "Parks, Recreation and Open Space Area," with no current plans for development.

According to Western Interlake Planning District office administrator Cherie Millar, a previous proposal to redesignate the SE parcel was denied by the minister due to an existing surplus of lake residential land in the area. The current application instead proposes an exchange of land designations so the overall inventory remains unchanged.

Millar said the proposed subdivision could accommodate both seasonal and permanent homes and would include a new public road.

Potential concerns or feedback from residents are not yet known and are expected to be raised at the public hearing.

If approved by the minister, the proposal would still require further steps, including rezoning and subdivision

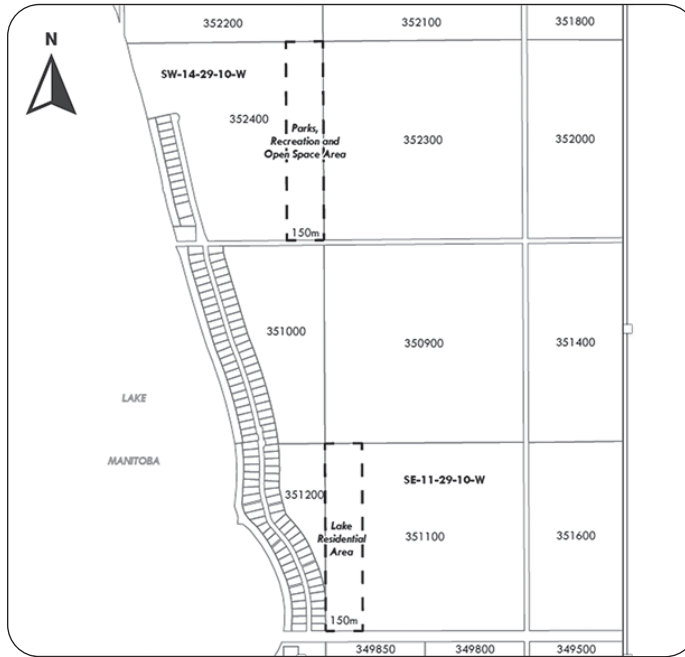


PHOTO SUBMITTED

Map shows parcels near Steep Rock affected by a proposed development plan amendment, including a potential 47-lot subdivision.

applications, each involving additional public hearings. The rezoning process typically takes a few months. Once

conditional approval for a subdivision is granted, the applicant has up to two years to meet the required conditions.

Residents and interested parties are invited to attend the hearing to provide input. Additional information is available through the Western Interlake Planning District during regular office hours.

No suspect located in fire at Harbour Hutterite colony

By Patricia Barrett

A fire broke out at the Harbour Hutterite colony (formerly called the Crystal Spring colony) in the RM of Armstrong while many colony members were attending the Manitoba Clean Environment Commission's public hearing on April 22 with regard to the colony's proposed wastewater treatment lagoon.

Towards the end of the first hour of the evening hearing, several members of the colony suddenly left the Fraserwood Hall where the hearing was being held and where many residents were expressing opposition to the colony project.

The Express was told later that week a fire had been set at the colony.

The RCMP confirmed there was a fire and that the Armstrong Fire Department responded to it.

"On April 22 at 7:20 p.m., Gimli RCMP received a report of a grass fire near Road 107 N in the RM of Armstrong," said an RCMP spokesperson. "The Armstrong fire department attended and were able to extinguish the fire quickly. At this time, RCMP have not located a suspect in the incident."

The Express reached out to the Armstrong Fire Department chief but he was unable to comment.

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Chaika dancers close season on high note

By E. Antonio

Several dancers from across the Interlake took to the stage at the Manitoba Ukrainian Dance Festival from April 9 to 16, including performers from the Fisher Branch Chaika Ukrainian Dance Club.

Laura Grzenda of Chaika said it was an exciting time for everyone involved, marking the festival as a success — especially as it was their first time attending in several years.

“Though the day was extraordinarily long,” she added, “it was a nice change to have something so close to home.”

Many dancers competed for the first time, and for two graduating dancers — Carli Nahuliak and Kiana LaFreniere — it marked their final competitive performance with Chaika. Whether new or experienced, the goal of any performance is to have fun.

“The main goal is to give kids something structured and unique to participate in, where we can share and learn about our Ukrainian heritage,” she explained. “It’s not about the score you get at the end, but about working together with your group and doing something you enjoy.”

The group also found competitive success, bringing home four gold and eight silver scoring routines, achievements that were well celebrated among members.

Chaika’s recent accomplishments come amid a change in instructors after primary instructor Deneika Pakulak went on maternity leave in November. In her absence, Caitlin Loree was hired to work with the older groups, while junior instructor Karlie Bjornson took over the youngest dancers.

“It was a bit nerve wracking hiring a new instructor, but the worry was all for nothing,” Grzenda added. “It’s been wonderful to have Caitlin join our club and the families have really enjoyed having her. Her breadth of experience along with her calm and gentle demeanor helped to keep the kids relaxed and



EXPRESS PHOTOS BY SARA URUSKI PHOTOGRAPHY

Chaika Ukrainian Dance Club’s rehearsals paid off this April, when dancers stole the show at the Manitoba Ukrainian Dance Festival and at Chaika’s year-end spring tea.

focused on performing come competition. Our club is very fortunate to have had the opportunity to work with her and we hope the relationship can continue into the future.”

The festival marked the near end of Chaika’s dance season, and the club celebrated the year with its spring tea on April 19. Amanda Bouchard of Chaika said it was a well-attended afternoon enjoyed by all.

The club also said farewell to its two graduating dancers and thanked its instructors — Deneika, Caitlin and junior instructors Karlie, Samantha, Khloe and Jessica — for their work this season.

“It was a wonderful wrap up until next fall,” Bouchard added.



Little Free Greenhouse sprouts at September Acres

By E. Antonio

One Interlake resident's idea is growing into something positive after she came across a Little Free Greenhouse post online last year.

Lacey Jaye Sylvester, co-owner of September Acres, a small hobby farm just south of Gimli in Husavik, said the concept quickly took root.

"I love being creative and was looking for something to do. I had a bunch of extra gardening stuff and when I saw a Little Free Greenhouse online, I knew I just had to bring one here," she explained. "Once something is one my mind, it's not a matter of if something is happening — it it's a matter of when."

The September Acres Little Free Greenhouse was built using a friend's extra windows and is located at the end of the property's driveway. Inside, visitors will find pots, plants, seeds and other gardening knick-knacks for the community to enjoy.

Operating much like a Little Free Library, the greenhouse encourages visitors to take what they need and give what they can to keep the exchange going.

The idea builds on Sylvester's earlier project — a Little Free Library set up on the property — with plans already in place to install a third library elsewhere in the community by the end of summer.



September Acres has a new Little Free Greenhouse at the end of their property, featuring an array of gardening items for community members to exchange, similar to a Little Free Library.

"I want to be able to spread creativity and joy with others," Sylvester added. "This is just one way I — and other gardening enthusiasts — can share a small treat with the community."

The Little Free Greenhouse is now officially listed on the worldwide



EXPRESS PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Lacey Jaye Sylvester, Danyx Sylvester, Bexyn Sylvester and Kaz Sylvester with their Little Free Greenhouse, located at 106043 PTH 9 south of Gimli.

Sidewalk Joy map and is one of only three locations in Manitoba.

Sidewalk Joy spots are known for bringing free, creative offerings to communities, including puzzle exchanges, small art galleries, dog stick libraries and Little Free Greenhouses.

Sylvester said being part of the movement is important to her because of its focus on spreading happiness.

"I want to do it because there are ways you can bring joy to the com-

munity," she said. "I want to show my kids there are ways to give back and make someone else's day."

She and her youngest son are already working on another Sidewalk Joy stand, with more details expected to be shared on social media by the end of summer.

September Acres is located at 106043 PTH 9, about six minutes south of Gimli. For more information, visit their Facebook page or Instagram, @September_Acres.

Easton Place doctor earns Physician Emeritus Award

By Jennifer McFee

A longtime physician is earning accolades for his contributions throughout his medical career.

Dr. Anthony Anozie is this year's recipient of Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority's Physician Emeritus Award.

Physician colleagues and community members had the chance to nominate recently retired or reduced-practice physicians who have provided exemplary service and expertise to their community.

With more than 35 years of experience as a physician, Dr. Anozie has worked in the U.K., Australia and Canada with a general surgery specialization. Currently, he is based out of Easton Place Clinic, which earned an award from Selkirk Biz in 2023 for the best new business.

Dr. Peter Cho, surgical co-lead for IERHA, nominated Dr. Anozie to recognize his distinguished career dedicated to patient care, education and collegial leadership.

"Serving the community since 1997,

Dr. Anozie has consistently demonstrated clinical excellence alongside a gentle and respectful demeanour," Dr. Cho said in his nomination submission.

"He is deeply well regarded by colleagues, trainees and patients and has long fostered a culture of collaboration within the surgical community. His immense experience and knowledge have made him a trusted resource and mentor to many."

Dr. Cho noted that Dr. Anozie has also trained and guided numerous general surgeons over the years and is widely respected as a thoughtful and effective teacher.

"His commitment to mentorship and teamwork has left a lasting impact on those who have worked with him and on the quality of care delivered within the community," Dr. Cho said.

"Dr. Anozie's career reflects the values of service, professionalism and mentorship that the Physician Emeritus Award seeks to recognize. He is most deserving of this honour."

Dr. Anozie said he feels humbled

and appreciative to be this year's award recipient.

"Highlights of my career include practising all over the Interlake and up north as an itinerant surgeon. What I like best is meeting people and sometimes making them well," he said.

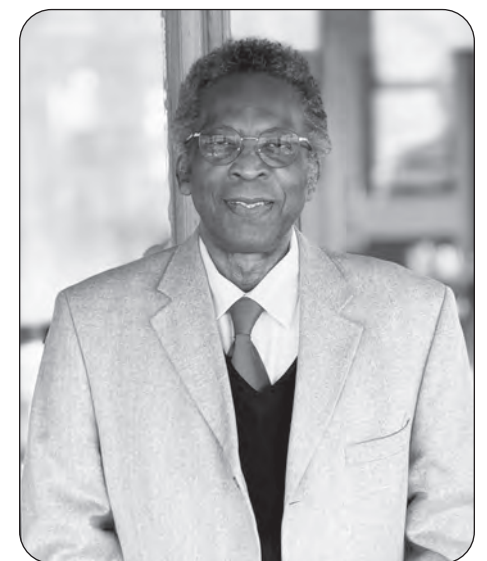
"I'd like to thank the people of the Interlake for welcoming me into their community."

Dr. Scott Gregoire, Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority's vice-president of medical services and chief medical officer, expressed appreciation for Dr. Anozie's contributions.

"I have had the pleasure of working with Dr. Anozie, predominately in my role as a radiologist, and his skill, professionalism and collegiality have always been exceptional," Dr. Gregoire said.

"He is deeply respected by his colleagues and consistently brings a thoughtful, collaborative approach to patient care."

Dr. Anozie received his award at



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Dr. Anthony Anozie is this year's recipient of Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority's Physician Emeritus Award.

Interlake-Eastern Regional Health Authority's annual spring physician dinner on April 14 at the Selkirk Golf and Country Club.

Interlake Offroad Club hosts safety and etiquette orientation meetings

By Jennifer McFee

The Interlake Offroad Club is gearing up for another exciting season with much to look forward to in the year ahead.

The club recently hosted a community trail development meeting in Balmoral where attendees learned about multi-use trail planning, trail safety, upcoming projects and more.

The club's origins date back to 2010 when a small group of riders got together for a few trail rides before spurring on a bigger vision.

"Early on, the club built its reputation by organizing fun, grassroots events like group rides and mud bogs — bringing people together who shared a passion for off-roading and the outdoors," said Calvin Sedleski, president of Interlake Offroad Club.

"From those humble beginnings, a strong community was formed — built on camaraderie, adventure and a love for the trails."

Today, the Interlake Offroad Club has grown into an active and organized group that hosts at least eight rides each year across Manitoba and northwestern Ontario. The rides attract participation from everyone ranging from seasoned riders to families across the region's scenic terrain.

The current 95-kilometre trail system connects a growing number of communities across the Interlake, including Arborg, Silver, Meleb, Fraserwood, Malonton, Komarno, Teulon, Gunton and Balmoral.

"This network is more than just trails," Sedleski said. "It's a regional connection point that brings people, businesses and outdoor users together."

With that in mind, the club continues to give back to the communities it rides through. Throughout the year, they participate in events like Christmas parades, Canada Day celebrations, Icelandic Festival parades, Touch-A-Truck fundraisers and volunteer work at Agape Soup Kitchen.



"These events allow us to connect with the public, promote safe riding and show that off-roaders are a positive force in the community," Sedleski said.

One of the club's most exciting new additions is the Winter Festival Obstacle Course Challenge on Lake Winnipeg.

"This event has quickly become a highlight of the season — combining skill, fun and winter riding in a unique setting," Sedleski said. "It showcases both rider ability and the versatility of off-road machines, even in extreme conditions."

Another major milestone for the club's growth is its ability to maintain the 95-kilometre trail system.

"Last year presented challenges, including a fire ban that delayed our work until September. Despite this, our dedicated volunteers worked tirelessly through the fall — continuing right into November — to improve and maintain the trail system," he said.

"This marked our first year working on a multi-use trail system, focusing on trail maintenance, development and responsible land use."

Entering this multi-use development, Sedleski said they had concerns about how local residents might respond.

"Instead, we were met with overwhelming support and appreciation. Communities along our trail systems



EXPRESS PHOTOS SUBMITTED

The Interlake Offroad Club recently hosted a community trail development meeting in Balmoral where attendees learned about multi-use trail planning, trail safety, upcoming projects and more. Throughout the year, the club participates in events in the communities it rides through.

were impressed with the work being done, recognizing the value of responsible trail development and stewardship," he said.

"This positive feedback has strengthened our relationships and reinforced our direction moving forward."

Now the Interlake Offroad Club hosts four safety and etiquette orientation meetings across different communities.

"These sessions have received a very positive response, helping educate riders on trail safety, respect for other users and responsible riding practices," he said.

"A great example of our inclusive approach — one of our members doesn't even own an ATV but owns a horse and still participates. That

speaks volumes about our commitment to true multi-use trail cooperation."

Looking ahead, Sedleski said the Interlake Offroad Club wants to continue to grow — not just in numbers but also in impact.

"From organizing rides and events to maintaining trails and building community relationships, the club is evolving into a leader in trail stewardship, community engagement and multi-use cooperation," Sedleski said.

"What began as a few riders hitting the trails has become a thriving organization making a real difference. The trails are better. The communities are connected. And the ride is just getting started."



sports & recreation

INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN

Interlake trio leads Nighthawks to first MJHL title

By Kieran Reimer

The Niverville Nighthawks captured the Turnbull Cup last Thursday, marking the first time the franchise has been crowned champions of the Manitoba Junior Hockey League and punching their ticket to the 2026 Centennial Cup in May.

For the three Interlake locals who anchor the roster — Adam Vigfusson (Gimli), Hayden Wheddon (Stonewall) and Dawson Zeller (St. Andrews) — it also marks the completion of their MJHL careers, as they will age out of Junior A eligibility following the Centennial Cup.

The trio of forwards played a significant role in Niverville's dominant regular season and playoff run, which concluded in Virde n last Thursday with a 4-0 series sweep over the Virde n Oil Capitals.

Last Tuesday, the Nighthawks took a 3-0 series lead with a 6-3 victory on home ice, seizing a firm grip on the series.

Six goals were scored in the first period, with Vigfusson, Evan Panzer and Merik Boles providing the offence for Niverville, while Virde n's Tyson Ulmer, Liam Goertzen and Austin Osiowy replied for the visitors.

Boles made it 4-3 Nighthawks in the second period with a shorthanded goal, with Zeller picking up the lone assist.

Niverville's John Scott and Kole Mears then put the game out of reach with a pair of third-period goals to seal the victory.

In net, Austin Dubinsky turned aside 39 shots for Niverville, compared to 15 saves from Virde n's Braxton Burdeny.

The series then shifted to Tundra Oil & Gas Place in Virde n for Game 4, where the Nighthawks once again delivered, earning a series-clinching 6-2 win.

Virde n's Dysen Drake and Niverville's Marlen Edwards each scored in the first period before a second-period surge from Niverville, with goals from Panzer, Edwards and Mears.

Virde n's Tyson Draper added one late in the period to make it 4-2 heading into the third.

Wheddon and Panzer added two more in the final frame, while Dubinsky remained solid in net, finishing with another 39-save performance.

Virde n's Micky Gross made 25 saves.

The victory capped a dominant postseason for Niverville, which saw them sweep the Winkler Flyers, defeat the Waywayseecappo Wolverines in five games and ultimately sweep the Oil Capitals.

Each finals game drew crowds of more than 1,000, with fans from both teams travelling well despite the more than 300 kilometres between the communities.

"I think this was the best crowd I've ever played in front of," said Wheddon, despite previous experience in larger Western Hockey League arenas during the playoffs.

"You kind of get chills after scoring a goal or winning a game in front of them. It gets pretty loud in there, so it's awesome."

After the final buzzer in Game 4, the Nighthawks swarmed Dubinsky in celebration. Wheddon and Vigfusson were among the first to break away, sharing a moment together at the glass.

The two have played together since the age of six through Interlake minor hockey, progressing to the AAA Interlake Lightning and eventually reuniting in Niverville.

"To win it with him is really special," said Vigfusson. "The fact that two Interlake boys were not just part of the team, but leaders as well, shows what the region produces. It's an awesome feeling to win with someone I've known since I was six."

Both players appeared in Niverville's inaugural 2022-23 season. Vigfusson spent his entire junior career with the team, while Wheddon began with the Selkirk Steelers in 2021-22 before splitting time between Niverville and the WHL, returning full-time for the past two seasons.

Zeller joined the club last season after spending three years with the Winnipeg Blues.

"Definitely the best choice I made in my hockey career," said Zeller. "Going to a winning team and finishing my last couple of years like this, ending with a Turnbull Cup, is awesome."

All three players recorded point-per-game postseasons. Vigfusson finished tied for the league lead with 19 points, while his 10 goals topped all skaters.

Dubinsky was named playoff MVP



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Adam Vigfusson of the Niverville Nighthawks celebrates after helping lead his team to its first Manitoba Junior Hockey League championship with a Turnbull Cup victory last week.

after posting a 12-1 record, a 1.31 goals-against average, a .956 save percentage and three shutouts in 13 games.

He was also awarded the Ed Belfour Top Goaltender Award during the regular season.

"It all starts with DUBY and our defence," said Vigfusson. "Everyone buys into their role and the offence follows. We knew we could score, and we trusted DUBY and the defence to shut the door. Defence wins championships, and that was our focus."

Vigfusson recalled a conversation with Dubinsky following last year's first-round exit to Winkler, when the pair committed to returning with a renewed focus.

After a summer of preparation, Niverville finished first overall with a franchise-best 51-6-1 record for 103 points.

The performance made them favourites to win the MJHL and strong contenders for the 2026 Centennial Cup.

Niverville will make its first appearance at the national championship May 7-17 in Summerside, P.E.I.

The tournament will feature nine CJHL champions along with the host Summerside Western Capitals.

Following several days of celebration, the Nighthawks have already returned to the ice in preparation.

They enter the tournament ranked No. 2 in the CJHL, behind the Rockland Nationals of the Central Canada Hockey League.

"I think we've had that in our minds all year — not just the Turnbull, but the Centennial Cup too," said Wheddon. "If we keep playing the way we are, we've got a good shot. It would be pretty special to win that as well."

The full tournament field is still being finalized, but Niverville knows it will face Summerside, Rockland, and the champions of the SIJHL and AJHL in preliminary round play.

The top three teams from each pool advance to the playoffs, with first-place finishers earning direct semifinal berths.

The Nighthawks open the tournament May 7 against the host Western Capitals at 7:30 p.m. ADT (5:30 p.m. CDT) at Credit Union Place.

sports & recreation

INSIDE > OUTSIDE > UPSIDE DOWN

Lott duo rolling at worlds: Gimli pair unbeaten, eye playoff bye

By Haley Cvar

Husband-and-wife curling team Kadriana and Colton Lott are off to a commanding start at the 2026 World Mixed Doubles Curling Championship, using experience, precision and strong communication to position Canada atop its pool.

The Gimli duo opened the event with a 6-4 win over South Korea and have since built momentum through the round robin, improving to 4-0 with a statement victory over reigning world champions Italy.

After more than a year of preparation to earn the right to wear the Maple Leaf, Kadriana said settling into the ice early made a difference.

"Usually, a big event like this, you're nervous to start," she said. "It was good to have a strong start. ... Now we feel more comfortable knowing what the ice is doing."

Canada's opening win set the tone, with Kadriana's draw weight and Colton's key hits helping the pair control play. They built a 5-1 lead at the break and held off a late push from South Korea.

The Lotts carried that form into Sunday, posting two more wins — including a 7-3 decision over the United States and a 10-4 victory against Finland — to remain unbeaten.

Colton's experience at the highest level has been evident throughout the week. Fresh off a national title at the Montana's Brier and a silver medal at the world men's championship, he has helped guide the team's read of the ice.

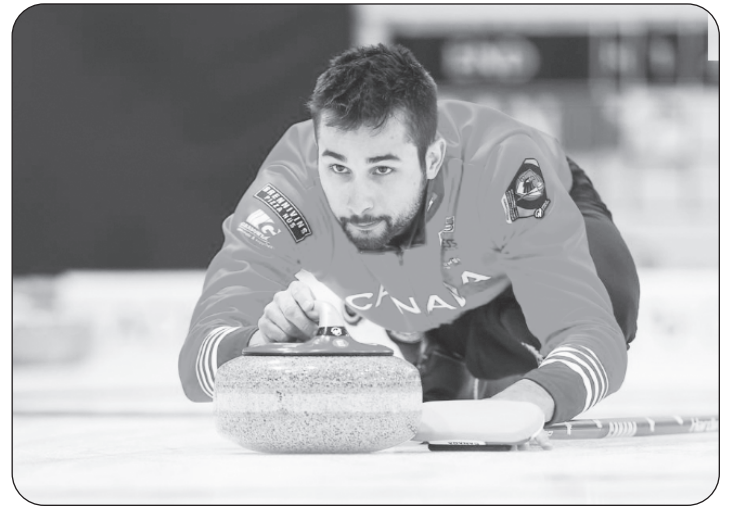
"He reads the ice like no other," Kadriana said. "For us, we caught on a bit faster than they did, and that was a huge part in our win."

Their biggest test came Monday against Italy's Stefania Constantini and Amos Mosaner, widely considered one of the top mixed doubles teams in the world.

In a tightly played game, Canada capitalized on key Italian misses and forced an extra end, where they sealed a 6-5 victory with a steal.

"We knew this was probably going to be our biggest game of the round robin," Kadriana said. "Coming out with that win just makes us more eager to keep doing better each game."

The win gave Canada sole possession of first place in Pool B and put the Lotts on track for a potential bye



Kadriana and Colton Lott of Gimli, compete for Canada at the 2026 World Mixed Doubles Curling Championship in Geneva, Switzerland, where they sit first in Pool B after Monday.

EXPRESS PHOTOS CANADA © WORLD CURLING / JAMES ROBERTS

to the semifinals.

Through four games, the pair has demonstrated the balance required in mixed doubles — combining precise draw play with timely power shots and strong communication built over years of curling together.

"I think we're quite happy with how we've played," Colton said. "It's trying to get a handle on the ice as soon as we can and then really capitalize on the misses."

Canada opened the championship with a 6-4 win over South Korea on April 25, followed by a 10-4 victory over Finland and a 7-3 win against the United States on April 26. The Lotts improved to 4-0 with a 6-5 extra-end win

over Italy on April 27.

The Canadian duo returns to the ice Tuesday for a pair of games, facing Hungary at 10 a.m. and Scotland at 7 p.m. They continue round-robin play Wednesday against Germany at 2 p.m., before wrapping up the schedule Thursday with games against Czechia at 10 a.m. and host Switzerland at 7 p.m. (Times listed are local to Geneva; seven hours ahead of Manitoba).

Fans can follow scores, standings and schedules throughout the week on the official World Curling website at www.worldcurling.org.

Gimli Lakers badminton players provincial bound



EXPRESS PHOTOS SUBMITTED

The Gimli Lakers hosted the 2025-26 Manitoba High School Athletic Association Zone V junior varsity championship April 22-23, finishing second with 33 points. The Teulon Saints captured the zone banner with 35. First and second place finishers advance to provincials, scheduled for April 30 to May 2 in Winnipeg. Pictured left: Gimli's Emmett Flasha won boys' single; middle, Lex Taran and Brendan Johnson placed second in boys' doubles; right, Tori Johannesson and Maria Donohoe also earned second place in girls' doubles.

U15 Lightning boys battle Manitoba's best at POE camp

By Kieran Reimer

Eight members of the U15 AAA Male Interlake Lightning competed in a series of scrimmages at the Hockey Manitoba Boys U15 Program of Excellence Spring Evaluation Camp last Friday through Sunday at the Hockey for All Centre.

Lightning representatives included Jake Nychuk, Titan Kirkness, Aiden Isfeld, Tripp Warburton, Crew Corbett, Zachary Schram, Henry Gemmill and Jagger Tesluck among a camp roster of 136 skaters and goaltenders.

Formerly known as the Director's Cup Prospects program, the Boys U15 POE is designed to provide high-performance players with the opportunity to develop advanced skills, as well as an introduction to the concepts needed to compete at an elite level.

Players were evaluated over the weekend by Hockey Manitoba scouting and coaching staff, who will ultimately determine the invite list for the Boys U15 POE Top 40 Camp in June, the second phase of the program.

Phase 3, the Boys U15 POE Competition Phase, follows the Top 40 Camp and is scheduled for August.



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Pictured left to right: Jake Nychuk, Titan Kirkness, Aiden Isfeld, Tripp Warburton, Crew Corbett, Zachary Schram, Henry Gimmill and Jagger Tesluck.

LIGHTNING PLAYERS:

- Defence - Jake Nychuk (Stonewall), 2025-26: 30 GP, 0 G, 1 A, 1 PTS
- Forward - Titan Kirkness (Fisher River), 2025-26: 31 GP, 2 G, 1 A, 3 PTS
- Forward - Aiden Isfeld (Gimli), 2025-26: 28 GP, 0 G, 2 A, 2 PTS
- Forward - Tripp Warburton (Stonewall), 2025-26: 32 GP, 5 G, 4 A, 9 PTS

- Defence - Crew Corbett (Stonewall), 2025-26: 32 GP, 0 G, 0 A, 0 PTS
- Forward - Zachary Schram (Stony Mountain), 2025-26: 32 GP, 4 G, 3 A, 7 PTS
- Forward - Henry Gemmill (Stonewall), 2025-26: 30 GP, 1 G, 6 A, 7 PTS
- Forward - Jagger Tesluck (Stonewall), 2025-26: 28 GP, 1 G, 0 A, 1 PTS

U15 Lightning girls showcase skills at POE camp

By Kieran Reimer

Eight members of the U15 AAA Female Interlake Lightning got to showcase their talents at the Hockey Manitoba Girls U16 Program of Excellence Spring Selection Camp last Friday to Sunday at Hockey For All Centre.

Lightning skaters Brynn Williams, Kallie Sutherland, Paige Bernier, Claire Sugimoto, Piper Tataryn, Kahlie Minnie and Allyson Keck,

along with Lightning netminder Emma Cassils were among the 136 players taking the ice.

Hockey Manitoba's goal of the program is to teach up-and-coming female athletes the skills, concepts and tactics specific to the Women's U18 Program of Excellence, ensuring that these athletes are given the proper development time in order to move to the U18 level and beyond.



EXPRESS PHOTOS SUBMITTED

Pictured from top left, clockwise left to right: Brynn Williams, Kallie Sutherland, Emma Cassils, Paige Bernier, Allyson Keck, Kahlie Minnie, Piper Tataryn and Claire Sugimoto.

High school hockey awards



EXPRESS PHOTO SUBMITTED

Lundar's Riley Johnson (left) and Erik Johnson were both named recipients of the Travis Price Hockey Spirit Scholarship Award at last week's WSHL Awards. Riley Johnson captained the Kodiaks while Erik Johnson minded the crease in the club's inaugural season of 2025-26.

POE players have gone on to play at the U Sports, NCAA and International levels in the past.

Players were broken up into eight different teams to play a series of scrimmages over the three-day camp.

Hockey Manitoba will later select 40 players from the camp to the Girls U16 POE Top-40 Camp in June, which is followed up by the Girls U16 POE Competition Phase in August.

LIGHTNING PLAYERS:

- Defence - Brynn Williams (Balmoral), 2025-26: 28GP 6G 1A 7PTS
- Forward - Kallie Sutherland (Pe-

guis), 2025-26: 25GP 3G 0A 3PTS

- Forward - Paige Bernier (Stonewall), 2025-26: 26GP 5G 4A 9PTS

- Defence - Claire Sugimoto (Stonewall), 2025-26: 28GP 1G 0A 1PTS

- Defence - Piper Tataryn (Teulon), 2025-26: 28GP 1G 4A 5PTS

- Forward - Kahlie Minnie (Stonewall), 2025-26: 28GP 10G 7A 17PTS

- Forward - Allyson Keck (Komarno), 2025-26: 27GP 3G 3A 6PTS

- Goal - Emma Cassils (Grosse Isle), 2025-26: 16GP 3-12W/L 3.11GAA .922SV 1SO

get inspired

> MEAL IDEAS



Flatbread Nicoise

Preheat oven to 450 F. Using mandolin, thinly slice potatoes.

Drizzle 9-by-13-inch baking sheet with 1 tablespoon olive oil and spread pizza dough to edges. Shingle potatoes over dough, leaving 1/2-inch border. Season with salt and pepper, to taste, and drizzle with remaining olive oil.

Bake pizza until cooked through and crust is golden, about 25 minutes. Remove and let cool slightly.

Bring small saucepan of salted water to boil. Add green beans and cook until bright green and crisp tender, about 3 minutes. Strain, rinse with cool water and drain well. Transfer to work surface and cut each bean into thirds on bias.

Strain oil from tuna can into small bowl and whisk vinegar into oil. Season with salt and pepper, to taste.

Sprinkle slightly cooled pizza with arugula, tuna, tomatoes, olives, green beans and red onion. Drizzle with vinegar dressing then slice and serve warm.

Total time: 50 minutes

Servings: 4

4 ounces baby potatoes, well-scrubbed

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided

1 pound store-bought pizza dough, at room temperature

kosher salt, to taste

freshly ground black pepper, to taste

2 ounces green beans or haricot verts, trimmed

1 can (5 ounces) Genova Yellowfin Tuna in Olive Oil

1 1/2 teaspoons red wine vinegar

1/2 cup baby arugula

1/2 cup cherry tomatoes, halved

1/4 cup pitted kalamata or nicoise olives, halved

1/4 small red onion, thinly sliced



Vietnamese Caramelized Beef Bowls

moons

1 bunch fresh mint

1 bunch cilantro

chopped roasted and unsalted peanuts

1 lime, cut into wedges

Cook vermicelli noodles according to package directions. Set aside.

To prepare beef: In medium bowl, whisk garlic, ginger, fish sauce, brown sugar, lemongrass paste and lime juice until blended. Add beef and mix until well blended. Marinate 15 minutes.

In large skillet over medium-high heat, heat vegetable oil. Add beef and cook, breaking up using wooden spoon and stirring occasionally, until beef is dark and caramelized, 10-12 minutes.

To make dressing: In small bowl, combine soy sauce, lime juice, lemongrass paste, brown sugar and sriracha, if desired. Whisk until sugar dissolves. Slowly stream in vegetable oil, whisking, until dressing is thickened.

To prepare salads: Divide noodles between four shallow bowls. Arrange caramelized beef, lettuce, carrots, cucumber, mint and cilantro in bowls then drizzle with dressing and sprinkle with peanuts. Serve with lime wedges for squeezing on top.

Prep time: 20 minutes

Cook time: 30 minutes

1 package (8 ounces) rice vermicelli noodles

Beef:

2 cloves garlic, grated

1 thumb ginger, peeled and grated

2 tablespoons fish sauce

4 teaspoons light brown sugar

1 tablespoon lemongrass paste

1 tablespoon fresh lime juice

1 pound Niman Ranch ground beef

1 tablespoon vegetable oil

Dressing:

4 tablespoons soy sauce

4 tablespoons fresh lime juice

2 tablespoons lemongrass paste

2 tablespoons light brown sugar

2 teaspoons sriracha or hot sauce (optional)

2 tablespoons vegetable oil

Salad:

8 ounces butter lettuce leaves

8 ounces carrots, peeled and sliced into matchsticks

1 English cucumber, halved lengthwise and thinly crosswise into half-

This Mental Health Week, let's talk about substance use

By News Canada

Being a kid isn't easy. Young people are often under a great deal of stress, and one way some youth respond is with drugs or alcohol. Teens may use drugs and alcohol to relax, to fit in with peers or because they believe it will help with focus or performance. They may also simply be curious about trying something new.

Substance use always comes with risks, especially for young people, because their brains aren't fully developed until around the age of 25. Cannabis, alcohol, nicotine and other substances increase the risk of harm to developing brains, hampering functions like concentration and memory, and can lead to mental health challenges such as anxiety and depression.

Substance use can make mental health struggles worse. It can be a way for teens to forget their problems and simply feel good for a brief moment. But that good feeling comes from the substance triggering the brain to release dopamine, the "happy hormone." Over time, regular use can interfere with the brain's dopamine system, actually making it harder to feel happy or motivated. It can also make existing mental health issues worse, or create anxiety. In some cases, teens using drugs can develop paranoia or schizophrenia.

Talking with teens about substance use is a critical part of



preventing harm. Teens may have incomplete or incorrect information about the substances they or their friends may be using, even legal ones. Clearly communicating your expectations and sharing accurate, factual information about risks—including those that may not be obvious—can help teens reduce their risk and make more informed decisions about their health.

You don't have to face the topic alone; you can find free resources online, like Health Canada Experiences, which has interactive modules for parents and teens to get better informed on substance use.

Teens may have questions of their own that they've been too nervous to ask. That's why it's important to create a safe environment to calmly and openly have discussions. You can learn more about starting the conversation at healthcanadaexperiences.ca.



Mediterranean Tuna, Feta and Dill Salad

Dressing:

2 tablespoons fresh-squeezed lemon juice

1 tablespoon fresh chopped dill

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper

In large bowl or on platter, lay arugula. Place cherry tomatoes, cucumber, feta, red onion and dill over arugula. Top with tuna; reserve oil from cans.

To make dressing: In small bowl, combine lemon juice, dill, salt and pepper. Whisk in reserved olive oil from tuna cans until mixture is well blended.

serve, drizzle dressing over salad and top with additional chopped dill, if desired.

Total time: 20 minutes

Servings: 4

3 cups arugula

1 cup cherry tomatoes, each cut in half

1/2 English cucumber, cut into 1/2-inch chunks

1/2 cup feta cheese chunks

1/4 cup sliced red onion

2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill or 1 teaspoon dried dill, plus additional for topping (optional)

2 cans (5 ounces each) Genova Yellowfin Tuna in Olive Oil

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FORAGE SEED FOR SALE: Organic & conventional: Sweet Clover, Alfalfa, Red Clover, Smooth Brome, Meadow Brome, Crested Wheatgrass, Timothy, etc. Free Delivery! Birch Rose Acres Ltd. 306-921-9942.

WANTED

Firearms wanted. Looking for all unwanted firearms. Fully licensed for both non-restricted and restricted. Anywhere from individual items to estates. Cash buyer, paying top dollar. Please call or text Adam at 204-795-2850.

LIVESTOCK



SPRUCE RIDGE STOCK Farms at Ashern has a good selection of 2 yr old and yearling Angus bulls on offer. These are big growthy bulls developed on TMR silage based ration in 15 acre runs to ensure longevity. Perfect feet, strong joints, moderate birth, combined with top of the breed growth. These are hard muscled bulls sired by some of the top A. I. bulls in Canada. Semen tested, delivered when needed, guaranteed. Call Ross and Helen Jerney and Family. 204-768-0333

APARTMENT FOR RENT

Tollak 2 is a 55 plus bldg. with river view 2 bedroom apts. available. Central air, F/S, DW & microwave; large storage area off the kitchen and a balcony; utilities and parking extra. Call the onsite office 204-482-2751 for AVAILABILITY.

APARTMENT FOR RENT

Farview Place in Teulon has 1 & 2 bedroom suites available for \$921 to \$1088 per month. Includes hydro, water, Valley Fiber TV/Phone/Internet. This 55+ Seniors independent living cooperative housing building is 5 storeys and has an elevator, paid outdoor parking, 4 laundry rooms, exercise room, lounge for family gatherings and events, fridge & stove in each suite. Local amenities include grocery store, post office, Shoppers Drug Mart, Access Credit Union, medical clinic, several restaurants & small shops. Please contact Andrea at 204-886-2760 or farviewplace1989@gmail.com for more information.



NOTICES

URGENT PRESS RELEASES - Have a newsworthy item to announce? An exciting change in operations? Though we cannot guarantee publication, MCNA will get the information into the right hands for ONLY \$35 + GST/HST. Call MCNA 204-947-1691 for more information. See www.mcna.com under the "Types of Advertising" tab for more details.

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Public Notice is hereby given pursuant to Subsection 162(2) of the Municipal Act that the Council of the RM of West Interlake intends to present its **Financial Plan** for the fiscal year of 2026 at a Public Hearing in the Ashern Municipal Council Chambers, 38 Main Street, Ashern, MB on Thursday, May 14th, 2026, at 7:00 PM.

The purpose of the Public Hearing is to allow any interested person to make a representation, ask questions or register an objection to the Financial Plan as provided. Dated this 21st day of April 2026.

Gary Campbell
Chief Administrative Officer
RM of West Interlake



Eddies Gravel Supply is looking for

CLASS 1 DRIVERS FOR LOCAL GRAVEL HAULING

Must have a valid license Experience is an asset. Valid Class 1 driver's license
Must report daily to Winnipeg Beach head office
Call 204-389-2023 to apply or info@eddiessgravel.com

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

TRUCK DRIVER/ SUPERVISOR

FULL TIME POSITION Mon. - Fri. 8:30am - 4:30pm

RIVERDALE Place Workshop Inc. requires a driver for our truck and 16 ft recycling trailer.

Residential/business curbside and bin collection in Town of Arborg and RM of Bifrost-Riverton and assist in recycle depot. Benefits and pension plan provided.

Class 5 and drivers abstract required. Criminal record check and Adult Abuse check required.

Full job description available at RPWI.

Drop off resume at 111 St. Phillips St. or Email at riverdaleplace111@gmail.com
Ph: 204-376-5584

ONLINE ONLY AUCTION #2 LEONARD BEWSKI FARM RETIREMENT ETHELBERT, MB WEDNESDAY, MAY 6, 2026 SOFT CLOSE AT 7:00 PM

VISIT www.gartonsauction.com for equipment details, pictures, and bidding.

FOR INFO OR VIEWING: CALL OR TEXT Leonard at 204-648-3442

TRACTORS, VEHICLES, TRAILER: Ford Versatile 876 4wd tractor, 7008 hrs; Case 2090 tractor, Leon 707 loader, 6751 hrs; Case 2090 tractor, 110hp, loader, bale prong, 10186 hrs; Case 2096 FWA tractor, 5.9l Cummins engine, Allied 794 loader, bale forks, 7' bucket w/grapple; 1994 Chev extended cab 3/4 ton 4x4 truck; 2004 Ford F150 pickup; 1989 GMC 3/4 ton truck; Intl 1850 Cargo Star truck; 1977 Intl 1700 Loadstar truck; Blue Hills gooseneck stock trailer; **FARM MACHINERY AND LIVESTOCK EQUIPMENT:** Case Intl 1688 Axial flow combine/pickup, 4183 engine hrs; Bourgault 6000 mid-harrow, 70'; cultivator, Vibra chisel 36', mounted tine harrows; Melroe bottom reset plow; RiteWay harrow packers, Plains Master 55'; Brandt 1060 60' auger, 540 pto; Blanchard 90' sprayer, 800gal tank, etc; Westfield augers; JD 36' deep tiller; Herman 61' harrows; grain vac, stone picker, grain trailers, seed tank; NH net wrap baler, Roll Belt 560, 1000pto, 5873 bales; MF 9' square baler; High Line 6800 bale processor, 540pto; Bale King Vortex 3010 bale processor/tank; 6-wheel Vicon rake; 3pth bale forks; Real Industries squeeze chute w/palpatation cage, etc; High Hog maternity pen 10'x10' self-standing/other metal panels, gates/frames, round bale feeders, windbreak panels; fencing trailer; wooden chute/gate; calf cart; head gate; hay trailer; shaver post pounder; fuel/water tanks and much more!

BID NOW AT WWW.GARTONSAUCTION.COM

JANITORIAL TENDER

Access Credit Union Fisher Branch

Access Credit Union's Fisher Branch located at 48 Tache Street, requires the services of a contractor to provide general cleaning duties.

Duties include:

- Cleaning of interior and exterior areas of branch
- Sidewalk clearing during the winter months
- Waste removal
- Watering flowers during the summer months

Tenders or resumes, accompanied by a minimum of two references, must be received on or before **May 15, 2026, before 4:30 p.m.**

Walk throughs available by request. Tender information can be obtained by emailing Vickie.Addison@accesscu.ca

Tenders may be delivered, mailed or emailed to:

Access Credit Union
PTH #14 Unit 2 - 23111 Stanley Business Centre
Winkler, MB R6W 4B4

Email: Vickie.Addison@accesscu.ca



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Must have drivers license and be willing to travel reasonable distances.

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Lundar Golf Club Pesticide Use Program PUBLIC NOTICE

Public notice is hereby given that the following pesticide use program will be conducted during the 2026 season.

For fungus control in turf, Instrata, Banner Maxx, Secure and Renovo and for weed control Par III and Vantage Plus Max II.

The projected application dates will range between May 15th and Nov 30th, 2026.

The public may, within 15 days after this notice is published, submit written comments to the department or register a written objection to the use of pesticide next to their property.

Manitoba Environment and Climate Change Environmental Approvals Branch
Box 35, 14 Fultz Boulevard
Winnipeg, MB R3Y 0L6
pesticideusepermit@gov.mb.ca

FINANCIAL SERVICES

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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Timchishen Seed Farms - Arborg

Timchishen Seed Farms is currently seeking dependable individuals to join our team on a seed farm located near Arborg.

- Positions Available:**
- Full-time Farm Assistant
 - Part-time Truck Driver

We are willing to train and tailor positions for the right applicants.

- Requirements:**
- Valid Class 5 driver's licence (Class 3 or higher preferred)
 - Reliable and organized
 - Willing to work overtime and weekends during peak season
 - Farming experience is an asset
 - Strong customer service skills
 - Problem-solving ability
 - Mechanical experience is an asset
 - Equipment operating experience is an asset

We offer a steady, dependable workplace with a strong emphasis on family life. Employees benefit from additional paid holiday time during non-peak seasons. Wages are based on experience, with opportunities for growth. Building long-term employee relationships is our goal.

Apply by contacting:
Darcy Timchishen
Ph: 204-641-1288



TOWN OF ARBORG PUBLIC NOTICE 2026 FINANCIAL PLAN

PUBLIC NOTICE is hereby given pursuant to Section 162(2) of The Municipal Act that the Council of the Town of Arborg shall hold a Public Hearing to present the Financial Plan for the fiscal year 2026 on:

Wednesday, May 13th, 2025 at 10:00 A.M.
Town of Arborg Municipal Office
337 River Road Arborg, MB

The purpose of the Public Hearing is to allow any interested person to make representation, ask questions or register an objection in respect to the Town of Arborg's 2026 Financial Plan.

The 2026 Financial Plan includes the following general borrowing proposals:

- Borrowing of \$200,000 at 5% over 10-years for the purchase of land for Recreation;
- Borrowing of \$400,000 at 5% over 10-years for the replacement of arena ice plant; and
- Borrowing of \$750,000 at 5.25% over 15-years for the Arborg Water Treatment Plant filtration system upgrades.

Copies of the 2026 Financial Plan will be available for review on April 24th, 2026 and may be examined by any person on the Town of Arborg's website at www.townofarb.org.com.

Dated this 15th day of April, 2026

Cindy Stansell, CMMA
Chief Administrative Officer
Town of Arborg

TENDER - PARISH BUILDING FOR SALE

Immaculate Conception Parish invites sealed tenders for the purchase of a parish building located at:

**57 Tache Street,
Fisher Branch, Manitoba**

The building is a 38' x 28' metal-clad structure with roof over a wood frame and wood foundation. The property includes a forced-air electric furnace, air conditioner, refrigerator and stove in a small kitchen, two functioning washrooms, and two cement entrance steps with railings.

The building is being sold **as is**.

Tenders must be submitted in a sealed envelope, be unconditional and be accompanied by a certified cheque equal to ten percent of the bid amount, payable to **Immaculate Conception Parish**.

Tenders may be mailed or delivered to:
Immaculate Conception Parish
Box 364, Fisher Branch, Manitoba

Tenders must be received no later than 4 p.m. on May 29, 2026. The highest or any tender will not necessarily be accepted.

The successful bidder will have five (5) business days from acceptance to provide the balance of the purchase price by certified cheque.

The building must be removed from the property at the purchaser's expense no later than July 31, 2026. The successful purchaser must provide proof of adequate liability insurance and will assume all risk and responsibility for removal of the building from the property.

**For further information,
contact Father Vijay at 431-373-6342.**

THE RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF ARMSTRONG

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Interlake Metis Employment - Summer Students

The Rural Municipality of Armstrong invites applications for the following positions:

Yard/Park Maintenance Office Assistant

Eligible Students

- Red River Metis students ages 14+ living in Manitoba
- Students must have attended school full-time in the current academic year and be returning to school on a full-time basis in the upcoming year.
- Part-time & Distance Education students are not eligible
- Proof of Red River Metis Citizenship (MMF Citizenship #) is required
- Students aged 15 and under must complete the Safe Work Manitoba Young Worker Readiness Certificate course prior to starting employment
- Available from June 29 to August 28, 2026

Further information may be obtained by contacting the office at (204) 278-3377.

Written applications to be submitted by 4:30 p.m., Friday May 29, 2026 to:

RM of Armstrong Office
Box 69, Inwood, MB ROC 1PO
Fax: 204-278-3437
Email: clerk@rmofarmstrong.com

THE RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF ARMSTRONG

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Youth Summer Employment

The Rural Municipality of Armstrong invites applications for the position of:

Seasonal Labourers

Qualifications

- Valid Class 5 Manitoba Drivers' license
- Knowledge in the operation and maintenance of riding mower, push mower, weed eater
- Knowledge of safety procedures and of the use of safety equipment
- Interpersonal skills with the ability to work well with all employees and the public effectively and in a courteous manner
- Available from May 1 - September 1, 2026
- Must be 16 to 29 years old
- This position will require physical effort and include outdoor work, in a variety of conditions

Further information may be obtained by contacting the office at (204) 278-3377.

Written applications to be submitted by 4:30 p.m., Monday, April 27, 2026 to:

RM of Armstrong Office
Box 69, Inwood, MB ROC 1PO
Fax: 204-278-3437
Email: clerk@rmofarmstrong.com

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EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Winnipeg Condo Corp. 20 - Gimli, MB

Winnipeg Condo Corp. #20 in Gimli is looking for a seasonal maintenance person.

The successful candidate should have basic knowledge of building maintenance, various yard equipment, and lawn tractors.

Key responsibilities will include:

- Mowing and trimming lawn
- Performing minor landscaping tasks
- Painting and basic repairs as needed.
- Operating and maintaining lawn tractors and yard equipment
- Assisting with general building maintenance

Salary will commensurate with experience. Please submit resume with work experience to shorepointev@gmail.com

Summer Student Partnerships

EVERGREEN BASIC NEEDS IS HIRING!

Summer Student Partnerships
Canada Summer Jobs Program

Store Clerk
35 hours per week

Warehouse Worker
35 hours per week

Receiving
35 hours per week

The program runs from June 29 until August 29 and is open to individuals aged 15 - 30 who are returning to school full time in the fall.

Send your resume Attention: Karen Bowman indicating which position you are applying for to:

office@evergreenbasicneeds.com
or drop off at 71 4th Ave Gimli

A-1 CEMENT CONTRACTORS LTD. IS SEEKING AN EXPERIENCED CONCRETE REPAIR TECHNICIAN TO JOIN OUR TEAM

THIS ROLE IS IDEAL FOR A SKILLED TRADESPERSON WITH STRONG EXPERIENCE IN CONCRETE REPAIR, CUTTING AND BREAKOUT WORK AND WHO TAKES PRIDE IN QUALITY CRAFTSMANSHIP AND CUSTOMER SERVICE.

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RURAL MUNICIPALITY OF COLDWELL

NOTICE OF REGISTRATION

OF PROSPECTIVE CANDIDATE FOR GENERAL MUNICIPAL ELECTION

Please be advised that a general municipal election will be held on October 28, 2026.

Prospective municipal election candidates must register with the Senior Election Official (SEO) during the registration period before they may begin to accept contributions, incur expenses, fundraise or borrow money for their campaign.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that I will be receiving candidate registrations:

For the office of head of council:
Between May 1, 2026 and September 22, 2026

For the office of councillor:
Between June 30, 2026 and September 22, 2026

at the RM of Coldwell office, 35 Main Street, Lundar during the regular hours of business.

To obtain a registration form contact the SEO at the email or telephone number listed below.

Davina Mason
204-762-5421
secretary.coldwell@mymts.net

Dated at Lundar MB on April 24, 2026.

Davina Mason
Senior Election Official (SEO)
RM of Coldwell



Rural Municipality of
FISHER

Box 280, Fisher Branch, MB, R0C 0Z0
Tel: 204-372-6393, Fax: 204-372-8470

PUBLIC NOTICE

2026 BUDGET HEARING

MAY 7, 2026

7:00 P.M.

RM OF FISHER COUNCIL CHAMBERS
30 TACHE ST, FISHER BRANCH

At this time the Council will present the proposed 2026 financial plan for the municipality. The presentation will provide an overview of the proposed financial plan followed by a forum for questions and comments from the public. The purpose of the hearing is to allow any interested person to make a representation, ask questions or register an objection.

Copies of the proposed financial plan will be available upon request, May 6, 2026 at the RM of Fisher Municipal Office, 30 Tache Street, Fisher Branch, MB during regular business hours. Questions and remarks may also be directed by letter to the Chief Administrative Officer or through e-mail at fishercao@mymts.net

Classified booking deadline is Monday at NOON prior to Thursday's publication Please Call 204-467-5836



TOWN OF ARBORG

NOTICE OF REGISTRATION OF PROSPECTIVE CANDIDATE FOR MUNICIPAL GENERAL ELECTION

Please be advised that a Municipal General Election will be held on **October 28, 2026**.

Prospective municipal election candidates must register with the Senior Election Official (SEO) during the registration period before they may begin to accept contributions, incur expenses, fundraise or borrow money for their campaign.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that I will be receiving candidate registrations:

For the office of Head of Council:
Between May 1, 2026 and September 22, 2026

For the office of Councillor:
Between June 30, 2026 and September 22, 2026

at the Town of Arborg office, 337 River Rd, Arborg, during the regular hours of business.

To obtain a registration form contact the SEO at the email or telephone number listed below, or visit the Town of Arborg office at 337 River Rd during regular business hours.

Jan Larkin, SEO
Town of Arborg
204-641-0329
janlar5001@gmail.com
Dated at Town of Arborg on April 30, 2026

R.M. of ARMSTRONG UNDER THE PLANNING ACT NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Council of the R.M. of Armstrong under the authority of the Planning Act will hold a PUBLIC HEARING at the date, time and location listed below:

Thursday, May 14, 2026
7:00 P.M.

FRASERWOOD HALL
10140 PR 231 Fraserwood, MB

Property owners are being notified in order to give them the opportunity to speak in support of or objection to the proposed conditional use.

People who wish to make a presentation in support of or objection to the proposed conditional use application must register with Planning at the R.M. of Armstrong Office no later than **Monday May 11, 2026 at 4:30pm**.

CONDITIONAL USE: # 2026-A-07
ROLL NO: 0044500
APPLICANT: 7317434 Manitoba Ltd/Harbour Colony Farms
OWNER: 7317434 Manitoba Ltd./Harbour Colony Farms
SUBJECT: Agricultural General Zoning district R.M. of Armstrong Zoning By-Law No. 6/04 Section 12.3-19 Livestock Production Operation producing more than 301 Animal unit

Conditional Use Requested: The applicant seeks to construct a new poultry operation. The applicant proposes that the operation will consist of 40,000 layers (332 A.U.), 40,000 pullets (132 A.U.), and 60,000 broilers (300 A.U.), representing 764 animal units (A.U.).

PREMISES: SW 28-18-3E

For further information, please contact:

Cori Audet - Permit & Planning Services Phone: 1 (204) 278-3377
Rural Municipality of Armstrong Fax: 1 (204) 278-3437
Box 69, Inwood, MB R0C 1P0 e-mail: planning@rmofarmstrong.com

Documents related to the matter to be considered at the hearing may be inspected or copied at the R.M. of Armstrong Office during normal office hours, 8:30am - 4:30pm, Monday to Friday.

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Bride-elect of
Bronson Ammeter
on Saturday, May 9, 2026
at 1 p.m.
at the Arborg Community Hall
The lovely couple are registered at
myregistry.com
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Public Notice Proposed Valley Fiber Radio Communications Project Telecommunications Tower

Valley Fiber Limited is a locally owned and operated technology firm based out of Winkler, MB. The ever-growing need for fast and reliable telecommunications has spurred our innovation. To continue this innovation, Valley Fiber in partnership with the RM of Grahamdale, is proposing to construct a 18m tower in Fairford. The tower will support communication equipment and Transport Canada required lighting. The tower will support one type of antenna that is 0.1m2 in size. To ensure the public's safety, anti-climbing shielding and signage will be posted on the property. No suitable structures were observed within the area that met project requirements.

Valley Fiber is inviting the public to comment on the proposed tower location prior to **May 27, 2026**. This tower is going to be constructed and operated to be fully compliant with Industry Canada guidelines found in the client procedures circular (CPC-2-0-03, including Safety code 6 and CEAA 2012). For more information on Industry Canada's requirements please see (www.ic.gc.ca/towers).

Project Details:

Location: Fairford, Manitoba

Legal: 177139 PTH 6

Coordinates: 51.5901, -98.7289

Valley Fiber Contact:

Kristy Arbeau

10 IXL Cres

East Selkirk, MB R0E 0M0

Kristy.Arbeau@valleyfiber.ca

RM of Grahamdale Contact:

23 Government Rd

Moosehorn, MB R0C 2E0

Email: info@grahamdale.ca

Industry Canada Contact:

400 St. Mary Ave, 4th floor

Winnipeg, MB R3C 4K5

lc.spectrumwinnipeg-winnipegspectre.ic@canada.ca



X - proposed tower location

OBITUARY

In Loving Memory of Leonard "Len" Oscar Johnson



It is with profound sadness that we announce the passing of Leonard Oscar Johnson on April 21st, 2026 — a devoted husband, father, grandfather, and great grandfather. Len passed away surrounded by the love of his family, leaving behind a legacy of kindness, hard work, and quiet strength that will be cherished forever.

Born in 1936 in Winnipeg and raised in Lundar, Manitoba, Len grew up with prairie values that shaped the man he became: steady, humble, and always willing to lend a hand. In 1958, he married the love of his life, Joyce. Together they raised a family and shared 59 beautiful years of partnership, laughter, and unwavering devotion.

In the years following Joyce's passing, Len was fortunate to find companionship and joy again with his partner of eight years, Elaine. Their time together brought comfort, warmth, and renewed happiness to his life.

A skilled auto mechanic and natural entrepreneur, Len built his life through determination and craftsmanship. He owned and operated his own Gulf gas station before later opening an auto parts store, becoming a trusted figure in his community and a friendly face to anyone who walked through his doors.

Outside of work, Len embraced life with enthusiasm. He was an avid golfer, a passionate stick curler, and a sharp and strategic card player. Whether competing, socializing, or simply enjoying the moment, Len brought warmth and good humor wherever he went.

Len's greatest pride was always his family. His gentle presence, steady guidance, and quiet wisdom shaped generations who will carry his memory forward with love.

He is survived by his loving partner, Elaine; his children Donna (Bill), Wendy (Roman), and Doug (Tammy); his grandchildren Sara, Bryan (Rebecca), Ben (Dianna), Michelle (Bryceson), Jordan (Shannon), Jennifer (Ben), Jayden, and Corbin; and his great grandchildren Freya, Elliot, Clover, Amara, Amelia, Ava, Maeve, Vivian, Matthew, Taylor, and Indie. He is also survived by his siblings Leroy, Margaret, and Elaine (Denis).

Len was predeceased by his beloved wife Joyce, as well as his brothers Norman and Allen.

A funeral service will be held on May 2nd at 1:00 p.m. at St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Teulon, MB (Hwy #7), with Reverend Rick Condo officiating. A private interment will take place at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to the Manitoba Heart and Stroke Foundation, in honour of Len's life and legacy.

Len will be deeply missed and forever remembered.



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Anthony Masiak

Bulk Fuel Manager Interlake Consumers Co-op

Or fuel@interlake.crs, 204-376-5201 office, 204-642-2343 cell

We thank everyone for applying, but only those selected for an interview will be contacted.

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OBITUARY



HELGASON, Halldora (Dora) Mae (nee Sopher)
May 20, 1937 – April 8, 2026

Dora passed away peacefully at age 88. A devoted mother, amma, and longtime teacher, she shared 72 years with her husband, Wilfred.

She will be remembered for her kindness, laughter, compassion for all people and animals, and deep love of family, especially her grandchildren, and her cherished time in Arnes.

Lovingly remembered by her children, David, Donna, and Jona, and family.

A Celebration of Dora's Life will be held at a later date. Góða nótt. If friends so desire, memorial tributes may be made directly to the Bethany Care Foundation, Cochrane Alberta Branch, www.bethanycarefoundation.com.

Condolences, memories, and photos may be shared and viewed with Dora's family at www.MHFH.com.

In living memory of Dora Helgason, a tree will be planted in the Ann & Sandy Cross Conservation Area by McInnis & Holloway Funeral Homes.



OBITUARY



Deborah (Deb) Louise Allan (nee Goodman)

It is with great sorrow and heavy hearts that we announce the passing of Deborah Louise Allan on Thursday, April 16, 2026, after a courageous battle with cancer. She left us peacefully at the age of 71 years, with family by her side.

Deb was predeceased by her father Bennie Goodman, mother Jonina Goodman, sister Leslie Sigvaldason, father-in-law Gerald Allan and brother-in-law Ron Allan.

Left to cherish her memory is her loving husband David; her sons John (Carol), Ian (Marcy), Kyle (Stephanie); grandchildren, Scott, Jack, Shane, Jason; siblings Beverley Widenmaier (Gord), Maureen Palson (Dan), Darryl Goodman (Kathleen); mother-in-law Arlene Ericson; sister-in law Sandra Demarco (Terry); brother-in-law Lorne Sigvaldason; many nieces, nephews, great nieces and nephews; special relations Katie and Sheryl; additional relatives

and friends.

Deborah was born December 31, 1954 in Arborg, Manitoba. She grew up in Arborg, moving later to Winnipeg, where she met her husband David, whom she married in January, 1989. Deb and "her boys" eventually moved outside the city limits, settling in Navin, near Dugald, Manitoba, where she was once again able to enjoy rural life.

Deb worked in the medical field for most of her life, first as a clerk in the emergency department at Concordia Hospital and later as a medical transcriptionist. She enjoyed gardening, canning, cooking, and crafting. She was gifted with an artistic intuition and a craftsman's mindset, which allowed her to create wonderful creations. She was always doing some sort of "crafty" project and found joy in such work. She was also exceptionally skilled as a seamstress and sewed, knit and crocheted many beautiful treasures. Deb was also proud of her Icelandic heritage. She enjoyed researching her ancestry and was interested in the lives and stories of past generations. Most of all, Deb enjoyed spending time with her family. She was a proud Amma and her grandsons brought her much joy and happiness. She enjoyed playing with them, doing arts and crafts, and watching them grow.

The family would like to thank Dr. Paul, the staff of CancerCare Manitoba, staff on Ward 6E at St. Boniface Hospital, and the staff at Selkirk General Hospital and the Palliative Care Unit for all of their care and kindness.

Cremation has taken place and a private family interment will occur at a later date. She will be lovingly remembered and sadly missed!

Those we love don't go away.

They walk beside us every day.

Unseen, unheard, but always near.

Loved and missed, you will always remain.

Goda Nott Elskan

Friends and family are invited to visit Deb's memorial page at www.interlakecremation.ca, where memories and condolences may be shared.

Arrangements entrusted to:



Remember Your **THE EXPRESS** Loved Ones **WEEKLY NEWS**
with an Announcement in the **Call 204-467-5836**

OBITUARY



Robert Emery Meilleur
August 17, 1955 - April 16, 2026

Robert Emery Meilleur, age 70, of Pemberton, BC passed away peacefully surrounded by family on April 16, 2026 at Squamish General Hospital after a courageous battle with Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis.

Robert was born and raised on the family farm in Fisher Branch, Manitoba on August 17, 1955. There, he attended Fisher Branch School and Collegiate and spent his early years working in Manitoba, including for Manitoba Hydro. During this time, the budding entrepreneur Robert also had a music system business and provided the soundtrack for many socials and dances throughout the community.

Then, in the late 1970s, the adventurous Robert jumped on his motorcycle and headed west to British Columbia. After a period working in Vancouver, his love for the outdoors drew him to the Whistler area. While there, he maintained local parks and helped teach students how to build log cabins. It was during these early years in Whistler that Robert met a Danish girl, Susanne, and in 1990, they were married in front of many friends and families traveling from both Manitoba and Denmark. They raised two boys together for many years, and when they eventually parted, Robert proceeded in raising the boys in his same adventurous spirit.

In those early years Robert became a pioneer in the Canadian tourism industry by starting Whistler Snowmobile, a large successful snowmobile tour operation in Whistler, British Columbia. During that time, he lived in both Whistler and Pemberton before eventually selling the snowmobile tour operation after 20-plus years in business.

Robert then opened a successful gardening, landscaping, and irrigation business for many years in Pemberton until his retirement. It was there in 2008, through friends he met and dated a lovely English gal, Angie whom he affectionately called his "sweetheart." Robert eventually asked her to marry him, and in 2022, Robert and Angie were married, surrounded by their families from near and far along with friends at their new home overlooking beautiful Lillooet Lake and the surrounding mountains.

Robert's heart for giving was huge. He donated much of his free time to many organizations, including the Legion and Lions Club where he proudly served as President and spent time helping at a school/orphanage in Africa. Rob's passion was the outdoors and he was in his element while hiking, fishing, hunting, skiing, and snowmobiling. He was also a lifelong enthusiast of curling. Robert was a man who lived life on his own terms - a spirited adventurer and a dedicated community family man who will be deeply missed.

He leaves to mourn his loving wife and sweetheart Angie, his children Denis (Lydia), Jorden, and Lovisa (Erich), his stepchildren Tanya (Scottie) and Neil (Alex), and all the cherished grandchildren. Also left to grieve is his sister, Louise, and his brothers: Gilles (Carmelle), Adrian (Debbie), George (Rose), Aurele (Rita), David (Cheryl), Donald, and Paul (Pam) and numerous nieces and nephews who all immensely loved their uncle. He is also survived by Susanne, the mother of his two boys and will also be deeply missed by many relatives and friends. Robert was preceded in death by his parents, Maurice Meilleur and Alma Alice Meilleur (nee Bernier).

The family would like to extend their sincere and heartfelt thanks to the staff at Squamish General Hospital and the Pemberton Clinic for the excellent personal care they provided to Robert. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made in Robert's memory to the Canadian Pulmonary Fibrosis Foundation. <https://cpff.ca>

"Two roads diverged in a wood, and I took the one less traveled by".

Celebrations of Life British Columbia

A celebration of life will be held at Paul Selina's residence at 1864 Highway 99, Pemberton, BC on Saturday, June 13th between 2:00 pm and 5:00 pm.

Manitoba

A secondary celebration of life will take place in Robert's hometown, Fisher Branch, Manitoba on Sunday, June 28th between 1:00 pm and 4:00 pm at the Ukrainian National Hall.

OBITUARY

Linda Grace Hallett

Linda Grace Hallett, aged 55, passed away peacefully on April 23, 2026 in Hodgson, Manitoba. She was born on January 7, 1971 in Ashern, Manitoba. Linda Hallett will be remembered for her kindness, strength, and love for family and friends.

She is survived by her children, Crystal, Wayne, Michael, Donavon, Lisa, Jessica and Jeramy, her grandkids Savanna, Samantha, Jaxynn, Lexi, Jayce, and Elijah and was predeceased by her parents.

Linda Hallett will be deeply missed and forever remembered.

In accordance with her wishes, there will be no funeral service and her remains will be cremated. She will be lovingly remembered by all who knew her.

FISHER FUNERAL HOME INC.

In care of arrangements. Fisher Branch, MB
204-372-6803 or 204-372-6271

OBITUARY



Christopher (Chris) William Grier
1953 - 2026

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of Chris Grier, who unexpectedly departed from our lives on April 13, 2026 at the St. Boniface Hospital in Winnipeg, MB. Born on March 10, 1953 in Vita, MB, Chris was a man of few words but he cast a long shadow, a kind soul always ready to offer a hand or his truck to a friend or neighbour.

Chris loved classic cars, and could name every breed of cow or type of crop you might see. He was endlessly gentle and joyful with children and animals, and his handwriting was a beautiful neat script you may not have expected from the man with the perpetual farmer's tan.

Chris is survived by his sweetheart and wife, Daphne; his two children, Deena and Quinn, who he is wonderfully proud of and who both learned to catch and throw a baseball under his careful tutelage; his sisters, Cheryl (Earl) and Patricia; his brothers, Terry (Marlene) and Russ (Carol); and his brothers-in-law, Gordon (Grace), Harold (Holly), Murray (Gwen), and Dean Ross (Doreen).

He was predeceased by his parents Bill and Joyce, his brother Greg, and his mother-in-law Beatrice.

A Celebration of Chris's Life will be held in Riverton, MB for family, with his interment to take place in Greenridge under the summer sun.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations to be made to the Heart & Stroke Foundation of Canada in Chris's memory.

Tributes: www.gilbartfuneralhome.com

Gilbart Funeral Home, Gimli in care of arrangements.



Announcements



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OBITUARY

Jason Bjorn Bednarek
September 26, 1972 - December 27, 2025

With heavy hearts, we announce the passing of our beloved husband, dad, and Afi, Jason Bednarek. Jason passed away with the love of his life by his side on December 27, 2025, at the age of 53.

He leaves behind his devoted wife, Joanie, and their cherished children Bjorn (Morgan), McKenna (Skyler), Amy-Jo, Shay-Lyn (Ben), and Sadie, and treasured grandchildren JJ, Johanna, and Acelyn. He is also survived by his big brother Mark (Jerri).

Jason was predeceased by his parents, Larry and Judy. A Memorial Service to honor Jason's life will be held at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, June 6, 2026 in the Ashern Centennial Hall, with Dawn Tober officiating, followed by a luncheon in the hall and burial at the Betel Churchyard Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks that you pay it forward and help someone in need, in Jason's honor.

Arrangements by:
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Saturday, May 9th 9AM-5PM

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